



REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM

Theoretical Review of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency



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October 2020

Growing Tensions in Eastern Mediterranean

**Biafra Question in Nigeria * Russia: Chauvinist Stalinism
PTS/FT: Failure to Understand China's Capitalism**

English-Language Theoretical Review of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), New Series No.45, October 2020

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Picture on the cover: French Carrier "Charles de Gaulle" (Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/ffc/Porte-avions_Charles_de_Gaulle_-_Cr%C3%A9dit_Marine_Nationale.jpg)

Revolutionary Communism is the monthly English-language journal published by the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT). The RCIT has sections and activists in South Korea, Pakistan, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, Yemen, Israel / Occupied Palestine, Brazil, Mexico, Russia, Nigeria, Kenya, Britain, Germany, and Austria.

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Nigeria: Defend IPOB Against State Aggression!

Support the Creation of A Biafran Republic in the South East!

Statement of the Revolutionary Socialist Vanguard (Nigerian Section of the RCIT), 25 08.2020

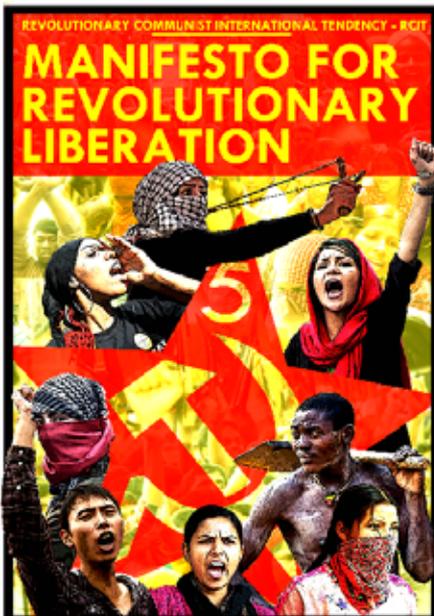
1. The Department of State Services has on Sunday, 23rd August, killed 21 members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in Emene, Enugu State during a meeting of the group. Reports have it that after initial attempts to arrest certain members of the group proved abortive due to resistance from members, more state reinforcements came in and opened fire in a frenzy.[1] IPOB which was founded by Nnamdi Kanu is one of the major groups that calls for the formation of a Biafran Republic in the South Eastern part of Nigeria in the model that was set by the then Military governor of the South Eastern region who led the Igbo majority of the region, organized in the Biafran army, against the Nigerian army in the civil war of 1967-70.

2. IPOB since its inception in 2012 has been under constant persecution alongside other pro-Biafran nationalist groups like the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), by the Nigerian state with more than 150 of its members killed in peaceful protests and demonstrations. In 2017 the group was declared a terrorist organization by the Nigerian Armed Forces and its leader Nnamdi Kanu, now lives in exile as he is wanted by the Nigerian authorities for bogus crimes of treasonable felony etc.[2] Despite all of these, the wanton killing is no doubt a panic attack by a fidgety Nigerian government that is rather shaken by the recent and on going events in Mali. The overthrow of Ibrahim Keita of Mali might have also given the national movement the incentive to begin organizing.

3. We have stated the significance of the popular uprising in Mali for the liberation struggle in Africa; *"Thus, the struggle in Mali is part of the fright shaking the heart of the capitalist order....We reaffirm the global significance of the insurrection in Mali and its importance in the African liberation struggle,"*[3] Hence we see this as another crucial occurrence which may lead to other important developments in the region and across Sub-Saharan Africa.

4. Many liberals who have strong sympathies for the Igbo national movement have referred, as a sign of oppression, mostly to the fact that since the end of the civil war in 1970 no Igbo from the 5 states which chiefly represent this nationality have become president/head of state. While this can not be disconnected from the oppression of the South Eastern people as no one can deny the gerry mandering which makes the North the largest region and since it does not indicate that only members of this ethnic group are oppressed in a similar manner, the oppression is basically economic than mere marginalization from political office. So we see similar national movements/sentiments rising in the Western part of the country which seek to break away from the Nigerian conclave. A striking example of this strong nationalist sentiment in Western Nigeria is the popular support for the South Western Security Network (Amotekun).

5. We support the right of oppressed nationalities and ethnic groups to self determination as a Marxist principle on the national question. Hence we stand in solidarity with IPOB, MASSOB and the whole Igbo nationalist movement and all ethnic groups that wants to be part of a Biafran republic, even though we are well aware that the leaderships of these movements comprise mainly of bourgeois and petty bourgeois elements with sometimes backward, extreme or anarchistic persuasions. That is why we offer no political support to the leaderships of these movements, we advocate for the combination of the nationalist campaign with the democratic running of such movements where discussions will be done collectively and decisions executed unanimously. For us a socialist revolution would be impossible or incomplete in Nigeria without a robust national program that blocks the route for capitalist exploitation through tribalism and ethnic inequalities. In the same vein, it is possible that a nationalist movement provides the necessary thrust that when harnessed and ex-



PROGRAM OF THE RCIT

Manifesto for Revolutionary Liberation

Adopted at the 1st World Congress of the RCIT in October 2016

Introduction * I. Decaying Capitalism * II. Today's Worldwide Historic Revolutionary Period * III. The Reactionary Offensive of the Ruling Class * IV. A Program for Socialist Revolution to Halt Humanity's Collapse into Barbarism * V. The Crisis of Leadership and the Construction of a Revolutionary World Party * VI. Work in Mass Organizations and the United Front Tactic * VII. The Semi-Colonial South * VIII. The Emerging Imperialist Great Powers of the East: China and Russia * IX. The Old Imperialist Great Powers: The EU, North America and Japan * X. Conclusion

A RCIT Pamphlet, 36 pages, A5 Format

panded properly can lead to a socialist revolution.

6. We distance ourselves from those liberals, left forces, and centrists who denigrate or berate the national movements, some of these groups and individuals go as far as denouncing these movements as idiocies and identity politics. Others reduce their contribution to the question to condemnations of the barbaric acts of the government in suppressing the peaceful demonstrations and mix with socialist phrases the infringement of the right of the demonstrators. What these leftists can not see or choose to ignore is that such movements originate from concrete conditions of economic inequality and exploitation of the masses which makes their call for political and economic self-determination legitimate. Further, when these leftists fail to take the side of movements of oppressed nations either actively or passively, they, on the one hand, reverse instead of advance the cause of democracy and, on the other, they strengthen the Nigerian state to not only oppress those ethnic groups but the whole population.

7. We condemn the recent killings of the IPOB members. The DSS has alleged that two of its operatives were killed in the clash and has plans to begin a man hunt for those responsible. For us this is only an excuse for an unending clamp down against agitators of the nationalist movement until they are driven underground. This will inevitably lead to broader attacks on democratic rights and dissenting voices. All sincere progressives, genuine revolutionaries and activists must defend the legitimate and democratic right of the Igbo people to secession and the creation of their own republic. When the strength is appropriate these bodies must constitute arm self defense committees

to ward off police and state aggression. We warn against any leaning of these movements towards imperialist influences, hence 'pressures' or 'recognition' from the United Nations (UN) and other international bodies must be taken with a grain of sand.

8. The national liberation struggle of the Igbo people must be united with struggle of national liberation in Hong-Kong; the Rakine states in Myanmar; Indian occupied Kashmir; East Turkestan and all over world. Finally no national liberation struggle can truly be successful without an intransigent war on capitalist exploitation and imperialist domination. Thus this movement of the Igbo people for national liberation must be combined with the fight against the moribund Nigerian ruling class and its imperialist puppeteers in the East and West.

[1] <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/410415-two-sss-operatives-21-ipob-members-killed-in-violent-clash.html>

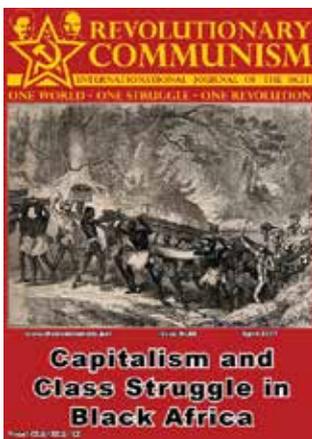
<https://www.pulse.ng/news/local/how-biafra-fought-dss-in-enugu/n0keyz5>

[VIDEO: Gunfire, pandemonium, as IPOB, DSS, Police clash in Enugu](#)

[2] <https://punchng.com/dont-restore-nnamdi-kanus-bail-fg-tells-court/>

<https://www.pulse.ng/news/local/fg-vows-to-arrest-ipob-leader-nnamdi-kanu/rgdhhb5s>

[3] <https://revolutionarysocialistvanguard.wordpress.com/2020/08/21/malians-dont-repeat-the-mistake-of-history/>



PUBLICATIONS OF THE RCIT

Theses on Capitalism and Class Struggle in Black Africa

An Analysis of Imperialist Exploitation and Oppression and the Perspectives of the Liberation Struggle

A RCIT Pamphlet, 24 pages, A4 Format

Introduction * Some Background Notes on Black Africa's Modern History: How Colonial Plunder and Oppression Blocked Independent Development * Popular Struggles against Colonialism Led to Formal Independence * Formal Independence as Disguised Imperialist Dependency * The Reactionary Role of White Settlers * Is Capitalist Black Africa Rising? * Africa in the Grip of Imperialism * China as a new Imperialist Great Power Challenging the Western Domination * The Working Class and the Oppressed * Rising Class Struggle * Key Lessons for a Revolutionary Strategy in Black Africa * Imperialist Domination and Authoritarian Regimes Remain in Place despite Formal Changes * Breaking the Capitalist Chain – The Program of Permanent Revolution * The Revolutionary Struggle against Imperialism * Imperialist Chauvinism and the Anti-Imperialist Patriotism of the Oppressed * The Independence of the Working Class and the Struggle against the Popular Front * The Struggle for Pan-African Unity * The Revolutionary World Party and its African Sections * Footnotes

Nigeria: CAMA or SCAMMER?

By Oladipupo Jimoh, International Liaison Personnel, Revolutionary Socialist Vanguard [RCIT Section in Nigerian, 02.09.2020

The Companies and Allied Matters Act (CAMA) was just recently amended and signed into law by the Buhari regime. The law which was first promulgated in 1990 is meant to deal with the modus operandi of the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), the regulatory body under which firms, business, corporations and NGO's must legally register before they can carry out commercial operations. A considerable portion of the liberal left and petty bourgeois stratum have praised the new law to the skies claiming that it will help small and medium scale enterprises (SME's) to thrive more and reduce unemployment by encouraging start-ups. Basking in the applause, president Buhari has gone ahead to name the new CAMA as one of the achievements of his administration since re-election last year.[1]

Many left wing apologists and comrades also smile behind the scenes particularly because of Section 839 of the said law as it tightens or increases "regulations" on religious bodies specifically churches because to these leftists it is part of the inevitable recompense that the thieving church overseers will face. Those leftists who do not cheer it on surreptitiously keep mum about the seemingly progressive law because they have reduced themselves to bourgeois electioneering parties. When considering actual facts, the controversial section 839 is anything but progressive as we shall soon see but before we take a closer look let us first weigh the argument for the so-called small and medium scale enterprises (SME's) and start-ups.

Any Real Benefits for SME'S?

The new law makes some technical changes with businesses no doubt. These include the ease to register a business or start-up even through online means; the ability to register from any part of the country and with a conducive amount of partners etc., These changes have zero effect on ameliorating the economic recession and the resulting hazards that the same government has wrought through the COVID-19 emergency measures which in turn led to colossal job losses, mass lay-offs, and the collapse of many businesses. Apart from these, the same ruling class at all governmental strata have attacked the most impoverished plebs through evictions and by demolishing their homes, markets and business premises. Price hikes have also been seen for basic services such as fuel, electricity tariff, all of which, coupled with the devaluation of the naira, have led to crippling inflation. All these factors combine to narrow the chances of having a start-up, even if such a start-up could begin it may barely thrive.

Irrespective of the current aggravated state of the aforementioned developments, the changes that should affect SME's in the new law have no real bearing on the over 21 million informal workers, petty traders, peasants, artisans who have not formally registered their businesses and who cannot understand what benefit an online form of registration could bring as they have been doing their businesses through community arrangements and house to house cooperation.

Section 839

Since the new law is almost meaningless for the imaginary SME's to which it refers, it must have a latent motive which bolsters the interests of the leading monopoly capitalists. In times of economic crises as these such interests can only be increased expansion and control. This tendency is most lucidly embodied in the most controversial Section 839 of the new law:

(1) empowers the Commission (CAC) to suspend trustees of an association and appoint interim managers to manage the affairs of the association where it reasonably believes that-

(a) There is or has been misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the association;

(b) it is necessary or desirable for the purpose of;

i. Protecting the property of the association

ii. Securing a proper application for the property of the association towards achieving the objects of the association, the purpose of the association of that property or of the property coming to the association,

iii. Public interest; or

(c) the affairs of the association are being run fraudulently.

(2) (i) The trustees shall be suspended by an order of Court upon the petition of the Commission or Members consisting of one-fifth of the association, and the petitioners shall present all reasonable evidence or such evidence as requested by the Court in respect of the petition.

The first question that comes to mind is how does the Commission determines when it is "necessary or desirable" for the purposes listed above to the point that it could petition the court to change a member of the Board of Trustees of a given association. Such arbitrary powers could mean the Registrar General of the Commission can side with party that promotes the business interests of Nigerian moguls during a dispute in an association. This new found legal unction can be used to subordinate small corporations to the bigger ones or liquidate them altogether. Some have argued that the new authority given the Registrar General is not so far-reaching since he must still resort to the courts before his wishes can be actualised. This is a by-word for lifeless text book democracy as we all know how bodies in government and administration always get on the good side of the judges and when they don't they can go ahead to flaunt court orders without reprise. In fact, court or no, the direct intervention of the CAC in changing the leadership of a said company or corporation is tantamount to meddlesomeness.

However these are still wanderings around the peripheries of the bone of contention, the real icing on the cake is that religious bodies especially churches and other NGO's fall under the ambit of this law, some even say they are the main target. A good number of the billionaire pastors have vituperatively vilified the law and threatened to challenge it by legal and all means available. The most vocal amongst them, Pastor David Oyedepo, who is rumoured to be the richest pastor in the world,[2] and is an apologist of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) claims that the law is a ploy to further divide the nation along ethno-religious lines by attacking the Christian bodies. His accusation is

partly correct as one cannot separate the latest moves of the ruling cabals from the background upon which they have conducted their oppressive business for decades.

CAMA as A Weapon of State Bonapartist Traction

What this law represents can be summarized into 3 highlights that can be expressed in different terms but are essentially the same or go hand in hand:

1. To create a false sense of progress with things like on-line registration for businesses and
2. remove, at the same time, old legal hurdles which restrict the capitalist magnates from undue expansion so that they can
3. have increased control over the economic space through state intervention.

These are features of the mature *state bonapartist* posture of the Buhari regime respectively the Nigerian ruling class in this time of economic upheaval. This posture is more of a *chauvinist state bonapartism* and this shift from neo-liberal to bonapartist capitalism is necessary because large channels of wealth accumulation collapse or are blocked so the only way out is further expansion through more or less direct state intervention.

Other Offshoots of State Bonapartism in Nigeria

Early signs of this shift have already surfaced, first, with the circular released by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) when the commercial banks were laying off workers by the thousands.[3] Another early sign during the lockdown was the disclaimer of the Nigerian Army when the repressive apparatus of the state was killing more people than the actual virus did. Anyone who doubts the chauvinist state bonapartist nature of the present capitalist period need only look at the escalating tensions between the two leading imperialist of the East and West—China and US. In the same way, tensions have also heightened between Turkey and Greece, and all states in general.

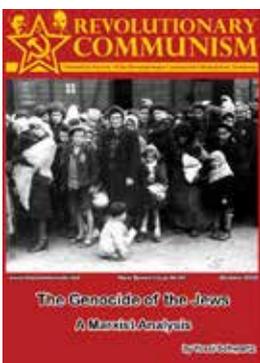
An example far closer home is the consistent threats of Nigerian businesses in Ghana which shows that the Ghanaian business proprietors are also looking for leeway but

are afraid of the retaliatory effects their actions may bring. [4] Shoprite a mall corporation owned by South African big business is threatening to leave Nigeria. It is this same drive that has led the government at various levels to enter a frenzy of demolitions and destructions of the homes, markets and make-shift businesses of the poor so that they can take over with more profitable ventures.[5] So we may see the informal workers that have escaped the recent rampage being forced to register with the new CAMA law.

Lastly, the can of worms of gargantuan corruption and graft has been opened of recent within the government especially between the ministers and the National Assembly (NASS) mostly on the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) where over 81 billion naira was mismanaged.[6] Many left groups have tried to give explanations for these revelations however the only wholesome motive for this is the urge to get more money as the original sources are depleting making them resort to probes and investigations even though the senators in NASS are partners in crime. A similar event can be seen in the exposure of the corrupt practises of Wirecard and the arrest of Nigerian born veteran fraudster and cyber-criminal Raymond Abass (Hushpuppi)

Is this Karma For the Billionaire Pastors?

As earlier stated many comrades rejoice that in CAMA the billionaire pastors and church overseers have finally met their Waterloo. Whether or not this plan to forcefully take over large sectors of the economy from business owners even if it is church business makes the ruling class stronger, they do not give attention. Granted, these pastors are sworn loyalists of the ruling class, they are themselves part of the ruling class and guardians of the capitalist class system yet in this case their emasculation has only little effect on the strength of the main economic players making the ruling class stronger altogether. If this law is not restricted to religious bodies alone why then should there be so much backstage grinning from our left wing comrades. Alas, one must ask what is the correct approach of revolutionaries to state intrusion in affairs of religious bodies. How democratic is this law when it applies specifically to



Publications of the RCIT

The Genocide of the Jews A Marxist Analysis

By Yossi Schwartz

Introduction * The Conditions of the Jews on the Eve of World War II * The Pseudo-Scientific Racist Theory of Social Darwinism * Anti-Semitism as a Branch of Social Darwinism * The Nazi Labor-Death Camps * Zionist Ideology as a Branch of Social Darwinism * The Genocide of the Palestinians * Who Are the Guilty Parties for the Genocide of the Jews? * The Uniqueness of the Genocide of the Jews * The Use of the Holocaust * So What Is Unique About the Genocide of the Jews? * Conclusions * Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 24 pages, A4 Format

religious bodies. To just say that religion must be separated from the state is not enough in this case because there now exist a general awareness of the adaptation of even religious bodies to the corporate institutions sometimes on an even global scale. The fact that these religious establishments have Board of Trustees or its equivalent is enough to explain this. That is why some have raised agitations for churches to be taxed. The call to tax progressively not just the business empires of the religious magnates but also their churches is correct in so far as those churches make profit through their gatherings such as meetings, concerts, conventions and what have you. Hence, taxing the businesses of the billionaire pastors (and/or the businesses of the churches such as schools and universities) with their property and the churches is a correct position. Albeit it does not translate to government intervention in church business as does CAMA, in fact, CAMA is a reversal of the principle of separation of religion from state.

CAMA is the single most important law at least for the current period because it allows the capitalist magnates to spread their tentacles into the NGO's and religious establishments making them stronger or better able to weather the storm of the current economic crises. If similar uproar is non-existent in secular enterprises or corporations as it is in the case of religious bodies, it is because the moguls of monopoly capital are already in charge in one way or the other of these enterprises. Those leftists or activists who smile at the sight of religious bodies losing control over their leadership fail do so partly due to their long standing tradition of sectarianism and because they cannot see; ignore or refuse to acknowledge the shift in method of the global ruling class from a neo-liberal to a bonapartist kind of capitalism of an all powerful state.

Revolutionaries must support the fight of religious lead-

ers and all who feel the need to, against CAMA without giving any form of political approval to the clerics and the liberal/petty bourgeois leaderships of the NGO's. This fight must begin on streets as opposed to the courts has some have suggested and must be seen as equally necessary as fights against other economic and anti-people attacks. We must call for progressive taxation of all church and religious establishments, businesses, and property. For the right to freedom of association including that of NGO's and religious bodies! For the true separation of religion and state! Abort the state bonapartist agenda! For a planned economy determined and governed by the people!

[1] <https://punchng.com/buhari-lists-774000-jobs-cama-others-as-second-term-achievements/>

[2] <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://buzznigeria.com/richest-pastors-world/amp/&ved=2ahUKEwiRv4y6zc3rAhXxQkEAHUvsBpMQFjAAegQIARAB&usg=AOvVaw2-al4eKnqFtM6nWbpU2a1c&cf=1&cshid=1599157636960>

[3] <https://www.premiumpremiustimesng.com/news/headlines/391217-just-in-coronavirus-cbn-orders-banks-not-to-lay-off-workers.html>

[4] <https://punchng.com/nigerian-traders-in-ghana-caught-between-a-rock-and-a-hard-place/>
<https://allafrica.com/stories/202008230016.html>

[5] <https://punchng.com/demolition-sangotedo-traders-sue-lagos-council-boss-for-n500m/>
<https://allafrica.com/stories/202009030005.html>

[6] https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=http://saharareporters.com/2020/07/09/all-gations-financial-misappropriation-nddc-unacceptable-%25E2%2580%2593senate-president-lawan&ved=2ahUKEwiW5_Wn2M3rAhXhoFwKHchOB4EOFjAAegOIA-hAB&usg=AOvVaw0JHDGG_SEMOIfdqpJARjH2

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Marxism and the United Front Tactic Today

The Struggle for Proletarian Hegemony in the Liberation Movement and the United Front Tactic Today.

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new English-language book – MARXISM AND THE UNITED FRONT TACTIC TODAY. The book's subtitle is: The Struggle for Proletarian Hegemony in the Liberation Movement and the United Front Tactic Today. On the Application of the Marxist United Front Tactic in Semi-Colonial and Imperialist Countries in the Present Period. It contains eight chapters plus an appendix (172 pages) and includes 9 tables and 5 figures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

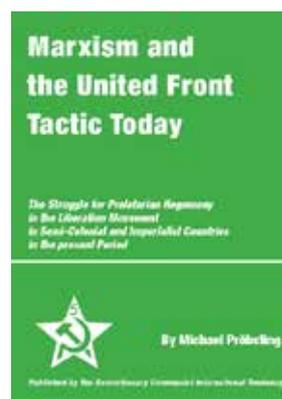
The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which give an overview of its content.

The united front tactic is a crucial instrument for revolutionaries under today's circumstances in which the mass organizations of the working class and the oppressed are dominated by social democratic, Stalinist and petty-bourgeois-populist forces.

The purpose of this document is both to summarize the main ideas of the Marxist united front tactic while at the same time explaining its development and modification which have become necessary due to political changes which have transpired in the

working class liberation movement since the tactic's original formulation.

In this book we initially summarize the main characteristics of the united front tactic and elaborate the approach of the Marxist classics to this issue. We then outline important social developments in the working class and the popular masses as well as in their political formations in recent decades. From there we will discuss how the united front tactic should be applied in light of a number of new developments (the rise of petty-bourgeois populist parties, the decline of the classic reformist parties, the role of national minorities and migrants in imperialist countries, etc.). The eight chapters of the book are accompanied by nine tables and five figures.



How is it possible that some Marxists still Doubt that China has Become Capitalist? (A Critique of the PTS/FT)

An analysis of the capitalist character of China's State-Owned Enterprises and its political consequences

An Essay by Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the RCIT, 18 September 2020

Introduction

A few weeks ago we published an essay which dealt critically with an article about the nature of China as an emerging power.¹ This article has been written by Esteban Mercatante who is a leading intellectual of the Latin America-based *Trotskyist Faction* (FT) which largest section is the PTS in Argentina where it has several national and regional deputies in parliament. Two weeks after our essay was published in English and Spanish language, comrade Mercatante issued another essay on China.²

In the following article we do not intend to repeat our extensive analysis of Chinese capitalism and its transformation into an imperialist power and refer interested readers to our respective books and pamphlets.³ Nor will we repeat our fundamental political criticism of the PTS/FT respectively FIT-U (the electoral alliance of the PTS with PO, IS and MST) which we have outlined in various other works.⁴

In this essay we will rather limit ourselves to discuss the arguments and conclusions of the PTS/FT's China analysis as they are presented in this latest article by comrade Mercatante. Before doing so we note that comrade Mercatante's articles contrast pleasantly with most literature which has been published by "Trotskyist" organization on this issue in the past decade. The author attempts to base his analysis not only a few pseudo-Marxist phrases and one or two facts taken out of context – as it is unfortunately the case with many "Marxists" today. His articles demonstrate that he can read economic publication and applies this skill – a compliment which we can not make to various others! The political neanderthalism of the *Partido Obrero* (with which the PTS is united in their FIT-U alliance) – a party which has become a Stalinophile supporter of Chinese imperialism – is a case in point.⁵ However, the skill to read does not automatically result in the skill to understand and the articles of the PTS/FT on China only confirm this old truth.

From denying the imperialist character of China ...

As we have demonstrated in our first reply to comrade Mercatante, the PTS/FT wrongly denies the imperialist character of China. It is doing so despite the fact that China has become one of the top Great Powers in key areas of the world economy and politics – in fact it is the global number 1 or 2 in various fields. In our works we have established the relevant facts concerning the leading global corporations, the number of billionaires, capital export, world trade, capitalist value production, military strength, etc. As a result, China has also become one of the key political players in world politics. The Cold War between Washington and Beijing which has started recently is a powerful confirmation of this fact.⁶

As we explained in our works, this controversy is not limited to the field of Marxist theory as it has profound consequences for the political strategy and tactic of revolutionaries. Recognizing the imperialist character of *all* Great Powers – the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan – obligates Marxists to refuse support for any side. This is why the RCIT advocates the anti-imperialist program of *revolutionary defeatism*. This policy has been initially elaborated by Lenin and the Bolsheviks and was later defended by Trotsky and the Fourth International against the revisionist distortion by Stalinism and opportunist centrism.⁷ The basic principles of this program have been famously summarized in the slogans "*The Main Enemy is at Home!*" and "*the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war*". These slogans basically reflect the program that revolutionaries must oppose any form of chauvinism, militarism and aggression of *all* imperialist states, that they must refuse to side with *any* Great Power and that they must utilize all difficulties of "their" imperialist government in order to advance the class struggle towards the overthrow of the ruling class.⁸

As we demonstrated in our reply with several quotes, the PTS/FT explicitly denies the imperialist character of China (as well as of Russia). It even claims that Russia and China can not become imperialist powers on a "*peaceful route*" (i.e. *before* a victorious world war against the U.S.) In consequence, the PTS/FT views the current conflict between Washington and Beijing as a struggle of the U.S. to "*send China back to the status of a subordinated nation*".⁹ Hence, the PTS/FT explicitly refuses a defeatist position towards China as two of their leaders emphasized in a recently published article: "*This, however, does not imply that we define China as just another imperialist country or that in the event of war with the United States, the position should be one of "defeatism" on both sides equally, but rather that the confrontation should be seen specifically.*"¹⁰

So, if the PTS/FT does not take a defeatist position, which position does it take?! It can hardly mean anything else but that the PTS/FT supports Chinese imperialism against its U.S. rival. In short, we see that such a wrong analysis opens the political road to hell, i.e. to the social-chauvinist support for imperialist China.

It is true that the PTS/FT has – fortunately – not openly stated such consequences of their analysis until now. But it is well known that many other "left-wing" parties – in particular Stalinist and Bolivarian forces – which also deny China's imperialist character have arrived at such conclusions. It is particularly relevant for the PTS/FT that it's most important partner in FIT-U – the *Partido Obrero* – also defends such arch-revisionist positions. As we have shown in other works, the PO does not only deny the imperialist character of China but even claims that the capitalism has not been restored! Consequently, the PO is a dedicated defender of imperialist China against the "*Gringos*".¹¹

Trotsky – following Lenin’s famous statement in *“What Has To Be Done?”* – once observed that a revolutionary practice is impossible without the fundament of a revolutionary theory. „*And here, on a much higher plane, we once again become convinced that in the field of Marxist theory there is nothing that fails to impinge on practical activity. The most remote, and it would seem, the most ‘abstract’ disagreements, if they are thought out to the end, will sooner or later be invariably expressed in practice, and practice does not allow a single theoretical mistake to be made with impunity.*“

The failure of the PTS/FT in understanding the imperialist character of China and its infatuation with pro-Chinese social-patriotism demonstrates the actual relevance of Trotsky’s statement!

... to doubting that the capitalist restoration in China has crossed the Rubicon

However, comrade Mercatante’s latest article reveals that the PTS/FT is not only confused about China’s transformation into an imperialist power. It even doubts the capitalist character of its economy – or at least of its core sector, the State-Owned Enterprises. It hardly needs much explanation that this is an issue of fundamental importance! We have shown in our works on capitalist restoration that the Rubicon in China was crossed in the early 1990s when a process of radical transformation of the economy on the basis of the law of value opened up under the rule of a Stalinist-capitalist dictatorship.¹²

In contrast, the FT claims that neither China nor Russia have *“yet seen the consolidation of a capitalist class”* – as this organization stated in a resolution adopted at its last congress in 2018.¹³ In his new essay, comrade Mercatante elaborates on this issue in more detail.

The sub-title of his article reads: *“How can we characterize the economic and social transformations that have marked China’s development over the past four decades”*. Hence the reader would expect a clear answer to this question. In vain! Despite its considerable length – more than 6,200 words – the article deals with many issues, provides this and that interesting detail, describes this and that development; yet, it fails in arriving at clear and explicit conclusions! Has capitalism been restored in China, i.e. shall Marxists base their program on the assumption that China has become a capitalist state with a capitalist economy dominated by the law of value? Yes or no? And if it has become such, when did such a development turn from quantity to quality, i.e. when did it cross the Rubicon? No answer, despite the fact that the whole essay is dedicated to discuss this issue!

There is a single indication in the third-last paragraph where the author states *“that more than 40 years after the beginning of the restoration, China is, beyond a doubt, a capitalist society”*. Well, if it is *“beyond a doubt”*, why is it mentioned only once in a side-note?! But leaving aside this little remark about the *“society”*, the author leaves open what is the character of China’s *state and economy*? Instead of clarity, there is ... silence!

How does the author justify such doubts and lack of clarity? Basically, the argument of the PTS/FT essay goes the following. Referring approvingly to the economist Michael Roberts (*“Marxists such as Michael Roberts reject the idea that China is capitalist”*), Mercatante emphasizes that the so-called *State-Owned Enterprises* (SOEs) play a central

role in China’s economy. *“But the vast majority of employment and investment is undertaken by publicly owned companies or by institutions that are under the direction and control of the Communist party. The biggest part of China’s world-beating industry is not foreign-owned multinationals, but Chinese state owned enterprises. The major banks are state-owned and their lending and deposit policies are directed by the government ... There is no free flow of foreign capital into and out of China. Capital controls are imposed and enforced and the currency’s value is manipulated to set economic targets.”*

The author continues: *“If we look at how assets are distributed today according to the type of firm, what we will see is that SOEs continue to be the corporate sector that manages the most resources, by far. In the industrial sector, SOEs have two-thirds of total assets, while privately owned industrial firms have one-third, according to the latest data from China’s National Bureau of Statistics. If we look at the Chinese firms that made it onto the latest Fortune Global 500 list of the planet’s 500 largest companies – a list on which China now has more companies than any other country – we see that the overwhelming majority are state-owned, either totally or partially. In many cases, these firms have limited global reach, operating primarily within China itself, but they achieve their rankings by virtue of the scale that the Chinese market allows. It is also public companies, not private ones, that lead China’s foreign investment abroad. In other words, most of the productive capital disbursements made by China in other countries are by SOEs. (...) It should be noted, however, that the distinction between publicly and privately owned companies is rather blurry. As Lee Jones notes, ‘Many limited liability companies, which comprise 43.2 percent of Chinese outward foreign direct investment, involve a mixture of private and public shareholders, with SOEs sometimes enjoying controlling stakes. SOEs own an estimated quarter of private firms, including subsidiaries listed on foreign stock markets; likewise, many SOEs have private shareholders.’“*

While Mercatante admits that private capitalists play an important role, he claims that the SOEs could expand their role in the Xi era and that they remain the dominating sector of the economy as a whole. *“In short, private (and mostly foreign) capital continues to dominate foreign trade, while SOEs are predominant in the economy as a whole (in which foreign trade has lost some relevance in recent years because the economy has grown more than exports).”*

The PTS/FT author continues his argument by claiming that the SOEs do not really operate on a capitalist basis. At one point he speaks about the *“capitalist and state sectors”*, i.e. suggesting that the state sector is different from the capitalist sector, that it is not capitalist. At another place he explains: *“To what extent can it be said that SOEs have thus far managed to escape the constraints of the law of value? They have been able to do so to the extent that they have consistently managed to maintain lower levels of profitability than private capital without that preventing them from taking on large-scale debt to sustain ambitious expansion plans. If we look at the ratio of profits to assets in state-owned industrial holdings, it is half that of the private sector in the economy. China’s corporate sector is thus not entirely subject to the pressures of profitability, yet it has continued to grow and invest. This is thanks to the Chinese financial sector – one of the world’s least deregulated and most open to private capital – which has provided the financial resources to sustain corporate growth. Of China’s total accumulated debt, which, counting the public and private sectors, reached 317 percent of GDP in the first quarter of 2020,*

half (150 percent of GDP) is in the hands of the nonfinancial corporate sector, which quadrupled between 2008 and 2020, according to BIS data. The OECD estimated in 2018 that 82 percent of the nonfinancial corporate debt in China was in the SOEs.”

In addition, the author leaves it open to which degree unemployment – which he rightly mentions as another important feature of capitalism – exists in China today. “Historically, the SOE ensured employment and wages, making the threat of unemployment virtually nonexistent. The functioning of capitalism requires not only that this threat be real but also that it form “a disposable industrial reserve army,” which “belongs to capital quite as absolutely as if the latter had bred it at its own cost,” as Marx wrote.”

Has the PTS/FT ever heard of “State Capitalism” and “State-Monopoly Capitalism”?

Unfortunately, the whole line of argument of the PTS/FT article is wrong – both in facts as well as in logic. In past works we have noted that this organization is infested by a lack of Marxist method which is increasingly replaced with eclectic empiricism and post-modernist arbitrariness. This becomes once again evident in the article under discussion. The author builds his whole line of argumentation on the fact that the state sector plays an important role in China’s economy. It seems that the PTS/FT is influenced by the bourgeois ideology which claims that authentic capitalism is “free market” with little or no state interference and regulation.

True, such an image is the essence of the neoliberal model. However, it is neither theoretical nor historical correct to believe that “mature” capitalism would resemble such a model. As it is well-known, the ruling classes in a number of developed capitalist countries adopted various forms of state-capitalism in periods of crisis like during the two World Wars as well as during 1930s. This was the case in parliamentary-democratic France, in fascist Germany and Italy as well as during the New Deal in the U.S. State capitalist economic policy was also continued after 1945 until the 1970s. It goes beyond the focus of this article but we want to briefly point out that even in the “era of neoliberalism” the capitalist state continued to intervene massively in various ways in economic life (e.g. Quantitative Easing).

As Trotsky noted in 1933: “But we should remember that originally Marxists understood by state capitalism only the independent economic enterprises of the state itself. When the reformists dreamed of overcoming capitalism by means of the municipalization or governmentalization of ever-greater numbers of transport and industrial enterprises, the Marxists used to reply in refutation: this is not socialism but state capitalism. Subsequently, however, this concept acquired a broader meaning and began to apply to all the varieties of state intervention into the economy; the French use the word *étatisme* (statification) in this sense.”¹⁴

In contrast to the Stalinists and reformists, Trotsky did not consider such “state-capitalism as “progressive” but rather as “reactionary through and through.” “While, during the epoch of the capitalist upswing to which the war put an end, it was possible to view – under certain political preconditions – the various forms of statification as progressive manifestations, that is, to consider that state capitalism acts to lead society forward and facilitates the future economic labor of the proletarian dictatorship, the present “planned economy” must be viewed as

a stage that is reactionary through and through.”¹⁵

More generally speaking, orthodox Marxists have always pointed out that capitalism in its last stage is characterized by a close alliance and fusion of monopolies and state. This is why Lenin elaborated the category of *state-monopoly capitalism* for the last stage of this system. Such he wrote in 1917: “Here we have what is most essential in the theoretical appraisal of the latest phase of capitalism, i.e., imperialism, namely, that capitalism becomes monopoly capitalism. The latter must be emphasised because the erroneous bourgeois reformist assertion that monopoly capitalism or state-monopoly capitalism is no longer capitalism, but can now be called “state socialism” and so on, is very common. The trusts, of course, never provided, do not now provide, and cannot provide complete planning. But however much they do plan, however much the capitalist magnates calculate in advance the volume of production on a national and even on an international scale, and however much they systematically regulate it, we still remain under capitalism – at its new stage, it is true, but still capitalism, without a doubt. The “proximity” of such capitalism to socialism should serve genuine representatives of the proletariat as an argument proving the proximity, facility, feasibility, and urgency of the socialist revolution, and not at all as an argument for tolerating the repudiation of such a revolution and the efforts to make capitalism look more attractive, something which all reformists are trying to do.”¹⁶

Furthermore, as we pointed out in our latest book on the COVID-19 crisis, it is clear that the Great Depression which began in late 2019 marks the end of the era of neoliberalism. There is an increasing recognition among bourgeois politicians and economists that capitalism in crisis requires a substantially larger and more interventionist role of the bourgeois state.¹⁷

Unfortunately, the PTS/FT seems to be completely clueless about the Marxist conception of “state capitalism” and “state-monopoly capitalism”. Despite its considerable length and despite its focus on the central role of the state in China’s economy, the author does not mention the term or even the idea of state-capitalism (or state-monopoly capitalism) a single time!

As we can not imagine that the PTS/FT comrades have never heard about these Marxist conceptions, we can only conclude that they refuse applying such categories because they do not believe that China’s economy resp. its core state sector have a capitalist character.

The capitalist character of China’s SOEs

Comrade Mercatante emphasizes in his article the central role of the SOEs for China’s economy. It seems to us that he underestimates to a certain degree the massive decrease of its role and the rise of private corporations (just think about global high-tech leaders like Huawei, TikTok’s ByteDance, Alibaba, etc.) in the past three decades.

According to a study the SOEs share of industrial output declined from almost four-fifths in 1978 to 20% in 2015.¹⁸ A working paper from the World Economic Forum – a prestigious Western imperialist think-tank which organizes the annual summits in Davos attended by numerous state leaders – stated recently: “China’s private sector - which has been revving up since the global financial crisis - is now serving as the main driver of China’s economic growth. The combination of numbers 60/70/80/90 are frequently used to describe

*the private sector's contribution to the Chinese economy: they contribute 60% of China's GDP, and are responsible for 70% of innovation, 80% of urban employment and provide 90% of new jobs. Private wealth is also responsible for 70% of investment and 90% of exports. The portion of exports from private enterprises might diminish as SOEs undertake more infrastructure projects in countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), increasing their public stakes in China's exports."*¹⁹

However, it is certainly true that the SOEs, despite the decline of its share, continue to constitute an important sector of China's economy – in particular among its monopolies. A recently published study published by the World Bank gives the following assessment: *"In conclusion, estimations in this note suggest that the share of SOEs in China's GDP should be 23-28% and their share in employment can be anywhere between 5% and 16% in 2017. It is worth to note that there are more straightforward data for the shares of SOEs in industrial output and employment. In 2017, SOEs accounted for 39% of assets, 23% sales revenue of core businesses and 18% of employment of industrial (mining, manufacturing and utilities) enterprises whose sale revenue was above a cutoff scale of RMB20 million."*²⁰

The key problem is that the PTS/FT fails to understand the character of the SOEs. As we have demonstrated in the quotes above, the PTS/FT claims that China's SOEs do not really operate on a capitalist basis. They do not say on which basis they operate instead. Do they suggest that the SOEs constitute a sector which still operates on the bureaucratic planning principles characteristic for deformed workers states? But let us leave aside this for now.

As a matter of fact, China's SOEs operate since many years on a clearly capitalist basis. We have demonstrated this in our works with numerous examples and defended our analysis against critiques like the PO.²¹ Let us show this once more with a number of facts which have been provided both by Chinese as well as Western economic sources.

It is widely known – and acknowledged both by Chinese as well as Western economists – that China's SOEs underwent a radical transformations process in the 1990s and early 2000. Since then they operate on the basis of the law of value.

Many enterprises were restructured, fused with others or closed. As a result, the number of SOE's was drastically reduced. Between 1998 and 2006, the number of SOEs declined from 64,737 to 24,961.²² In 2017, there were still 18,806 SOEs.²³ As a result, the share of employment in the state sector (this includes employment in SOEs as well as employment in government and public organizations) was massively reduced. As Table 1 shows, state sector employment as a share of total urban employment declined from 78.3% (1978) to 61.0% (1992) and 22.7% (2006).

When we look only to the SOEs (i.e. without the public administration), we can see that SOE employment as a share of total urban employment declined from 17.3% (1998) to 6.4% (2006).²⁵ As a side-note, we draw attention to the fact that usually, when the category SOEs is used in such statistics, it refers both to state-owned as well as to state-controlled enterprises.

This was the result of a radical process of mass sackings in the SOEs so that they operate on the basis of the capitalist law of value. According to official figures, about 50 million workers were laid off between 1993 and 2004. *"On average, from 1993 to 1997, about 3 million workers in the state sector were laid off annually. (...) As a result, the number of layoffs reached a peak, in which about 7 million urban workers in SOEs were laid off every year from 1997 to 1999. From 1993 to 2004, more than 50 million of workers in the state sector were laid off."*²⁶

As a result, profits massively increased in the SOE. While its Return on Assets was only 0.7% in 1998, this figure rose to 6.3% in 2006.²⁷ The PTS/FT – as well as their partners in FIT-U like the Stalinophile PO – might not believe that the SOEs operate on a capitalist basis. But one of the core institutions of world imperialism – the World Bank – knows better: *"Many SOEs were corporatized, radically restructured (including labor shedding), and expected to operate at a profit. (...) As a result, the profitability of China's SOEs increased."*²⁸ According to China's official statistics, the state-owned enterprises *"posted their best profitability performance in 2018, even as the country's GDP growth has slowed, as initial reforms yielded results and provided solid support to the world's second-largest economy. In 2018, aggregate revenues of the country's nearly 100 centrally administered SOEs increased 10.1 percent year-on-year to 29.1 trillion yuan (\$4.29 trillion). (...) Profit growth was even better, reaching 1.7 trillion yuan with an increase of 16.7 percent, the best results since these figures were first collected, according to SASAC spokesperson Peng Huagang."*²⁹ Does the PTS/FT know something about China's SOE profits which has been missed by Chinese and Western economists?

Comrade Mercatante points out that the SOE's rate of profit is lower than that of the private-owned enterprises. While this is true, this is hardly an argument against the capitalist character of China's SOEs. The SOEs in average are much larger corporations with a substantially higher share of constant capital (both fixed as well as circulating). In other words, the SOEs' organic composition – i.e. the relationship between the share of workers' wages and costs for machinery, raw material, etc. – is much higher compared with the, in average, smaller private enterprises. This means that the share of labor – which is the source for surplus value and, hence, profits – is lower in the SOE's than in the private-owned enterprises.

Table 1. State Sector Employment as a Share of Total Urban Employment, 1978-2006²⁴

1978	78.3%
1992	61.0%
1997	53.1%
2000	35.0%
2002	28.9%
2006	22.7%

Marx pointed the relationship between organic composition of capital, rate of profit and capital concentration out in Volume III of *Capital*. “A fall in the rate of profit and accelerated accumulation are different expressions of the same process only in so far as both reflect the development of the productive power. Accumulation, in turn, hastens the fall of the rate of profit, inasmuch as it implies concentration of labour on a large scale, and thus a higher composition of capital. On the other hand, a fall in the rate of profit again hastens the concentration of capital and its centralisation through expropriation of minor capitalists, the few direct producers who still have anything left to be expropriated. This accelerates accumulation with regard to mass, although the rate of accumulation falls with the rate of profit.”³⁰

Hence, the gap in the profit rate between large and smaller enterprises is not only relevant in China but also in other capitalist countries.

The capitalist character of China’s SOEs is also confirmed when we compare these corporations with those of other imperialist powers. Let us take the largest monopolies which rank in the latest *Fortune Global 500* list. As we have pointed out in our works, China has constantly increased its share among these largest monopolies and has now even become the number 1. In our last reply to the PTS/FT we provided a table on this issue. Let us now compare the profitability of these corporations.

A recently published study on this issue reports that China’s monopolies in this list – of which two-third are state-owned – have a lower profitability than those from the U.S. or Swiss but a higher or similar one than Japan and Western European rivals. China’s “profit margin” in 2020 was 4.5%, about half of the U.S. but higher than France (4.3%), Germany (3.3%) and Japan (2.7%). There is a similar result when we compare the “Return on Assets”: the U.S. leads with 4.9%, Germany (2.2%), China has 1.9% - the same like France – and Japan has 1.4%.³¹ (See Table 2 and 3)

We ask the comrades of the PTS/FT: if China’s state-owned enterprises are not really capitalist, if they do not really operate on the basis of the law of value, how on earth is it possible that they have a similar profitability like the capitalist monopolies of long-standing imperialist powers like Germany, France or Japan?! Is it not obvious that all these talk about China’s “non-capitalist” SOEs is simply nonsense?!

The State-Owned Enterprises represent a fusion of state and capitalist class

Furthermore, it would be mistaken to imagine China’s SOEs as a kind of state-commanding economy. In fact, the SOEs mostly represent a kind of symbiosis of state and private capitalists, state managers with large autonomy, private minority shareholders, etc. Numerous close bonds between the growing capitalist class and the state enterprises have come into existence since the beginning of China’s capitalist restoration, resulting in mutual benefit. An article on China’s new class of super-rich observed already in 2013: “What’s unique about China’s super-rich is that most of their fortune come from stakes in some of China’s 145,000 state-owned enterprises (SOEs), which dominate the economy. (These include *Fortune 500* companies like petroleum firm Sinopec, the bank ICBC, and China National Petroleum.) *Wealth-X* predicts that the ultra-wealthy population will grow by another

1,000 people in 2013 as a result of SOE activity. ‘Partnerships with state-owned enterprises is one of the key factors driving growth,’ says David Friedman, president of *Wealth-X*.”³⁴

It would be also wrong to understand the state’s role as an institution which permanently intervenes. An interesting investigation of China’s state capitalism arrived at the conclusion: “To the extent that the state does successfully intervene in SOE operations to achieve policy objectives, it typically does so as a regulator, not as a controlling shareholder.”³⁵

Furthermore, most of the SOE’s dividends do not go into the pockets of the state but rather remain in the hands of the corporation respectively its managers and shareholders. “Moreover, the dividend rates paid by central SOEs to the government in its capacity as shareholder are lower than those paid to private shareholders by Chinese SOEs listed in Hong Kong. Most importantly, perhaps, virtually all of the dividends paid by SOEs to the government are eventually recycled back to them: More than 92% of the dividends paid by central SOEs to the government in 2012 were remitted back to the SOEs in the form of subsidies”³⁶

Another study also draws attention to the close bonds of the SOEs and the capitalist class. “This process of financial expansion arose in the mid-1990s and gained spectacular impetus after the global financial crisis in 2008. While the state maintains strict control over capital account, private capitalists have penetrated China’s financial circuits in two ways. First, private capitalists participated in shareholding with state corporations through direct purchase of shares or via financial holding companies, investment funds, and insurance companies. This new bourgeoisie pressed for further capital opening of large SOEs under central management, most of which are now listed in stock markets with limits to non-tradable shares. Investment funds and new holdings were established to allow for the sale of shares and became fast vehicles for the formation of large fortunes. (...) Second, private capitalists speculated on real estate. Financial overdevelopment in China mobilized and channeled domestic resources via the financial system for major infrastructure and urbanization works, especially after 2008.”³⁷

In summary, China’s State-Owned Enterprises are not non-capitalist enterprises of a kind of semi-socialist character. They are capitalist monopolies with the state as a regulating force.

Some additional counterarguments

Comrade Mercatante suggests that various SOEs are loss-making which in his opinion would indicate that they are not operating on the basis of the law of value. However, it is a gross misconception to imagine that capitalist monopolies would always make profit. A study which compared U.S. and Chinese corporations arrived at the following result: “In terms of loss rates, in 2005, a sample of 6,000 companies on the New York Stock Exchange and the tech-weighted NASDAQ exchange showed that 36.2 percent of those U.S. firms were found to be loss makers, and the loss was 1 percent of national total gross domestic product. In the same year, 32.4 percent of SOEs in China showed a loss, and the loss accounted for only 0.5 percent of national gross domestic product.”³⁸

Another objection of the PTS/FT author is that China’s SOEs have substantially increased their debts. Of course, this is true and we have pointed out this fact in other works.³⁹ However, debts have increased not only in Chi-

na but in all imperialist countries! As a result, the non-financial and the financial sector are highly indebted in all imperialist states as Table 4 demonstrates. (Bear in mind that these figures are from the last quarter of 2019, i.e. before the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis which provoked unprecedented large state capitalist financial aid program. Hence, indebtedness is substantially higher today.)

Comrade Mercatante also questions to which degree there unemployment exists today in China. As we quoted above he claims: *“Historically, the SOE ensured employment and wages, making the threat of unemployment virtually non-existent. The functioning of capitalism requires not only that this threat be real but also that it form “a disposable industrial reserve army.”* However, any suggestion that this capitalist scourge would be absent in China belongs in the realm of fantasy. As we demonstrated already, the SOE’s laid-off about 50 million workers between 1993 and 2004. Today, unemployment is widespread in China and has substantially increased with the onset of the Great Depression in late 2019. We referred to this development already in our latest book on the COVID-19 crisis. According to estimations of Liu Chenjie, chief economist at fund manager Upright Asset, *“the pandemic may have pushed 205 million workers into “frictional unemployment”, where they want to work but cannot or are unable to go back to work. If true, that figure would represent more than a quarter of China’s 775 million workforce and would be vastly higher than the 6.2 per cent*

*figure posited by the government’s survey.”*⁴¹

The PTS/FT, PO and the temptations of Kirchnerism

What is the explanation of the PTS/FT’s refusal to recognize China’s imperialist character and its inability to elaborate an analysis of the capitalist restoration process that arrives at clear conclusions? We have already pointed out in our last reply that the PTS/FT is increasingly infested by the method of eclectic empiricism and post-modernist arbitrariness which has been introduced under the banner of Gramscianism. We also drew attention to the fact the PTS/FT seems to accommodate to its most important partner in FIT-U – the *Partido Obrero* – which is an undisguised standard bearer of Chinese social-imperialism.

It is not necessary to repeat this criticism at this place. However, we want to point out the broader context of this development. As the FIT-U – and particular its two largest components PTS and PO – experienced some electoral success in the past decade, this has resulted in a certain process of integration of leading cadres both in the bourgeois parliamentary system as well as the trade union bureaucracy. The scandalous vote of the Buenos Aires deputies of PTS and PO for a pro-Zionist bill in June this year has been the most outrageous but not the only indicator of this process of integration into the bureaucratic institutions of capitalism.⁴²

Table 2. Profit Margin of the Fortune Global 500 Corporations, 2020³²

U.S.	8.9%
UK	5.9%
China	4.5%
France	4.3%
Germany	3.3%
South Korea	2.8%
Japan	2.7%

Table 3. Return on Assets of the Fortune Global 500 Corporations, 2020³³

U.S.	4.9%
Germany	2.2%
UK	2.1%
China	1.9%
France	1.9%
South Korea	1.7%
Japan	1.4%

Table 4. Total Global Debt by Sector as Percent of GDP, Q4 2019⁴⁰

Country	Non-Financial Corporations	Financial Sector
Global	91.6%	81.3%
U.S.	73.9%	76.9%
Euro Area	108.2%	123.7%
Japan	104.7%	156.8%
UK	80.2%	175.3%
China	150.3%	42.2%

The strongest force in Argentina's trade union movement and among the progressive forces in general has been traditionally left Peronism, or as it called since the 2001-02 crisis, Kirchnerism. The ruling class of Argentina, an advanced capitalist semi-colony, has been increasingly looking for some time for alternatives to their traditional patron, Gringo imperialism. The advance of China as an emerging Great Power has offered Argentina – as well as other Latin American countries – a potential alternative to the U.S since some time. As we have pointed out in our works, Chinese imperialism has become one of the most important trade partners as well as foreign investors in Latin America in the past decade.

This process has accelerated in recent past since the Kirchnerists regained power after the elections last year. A few weeks ago, Argentina's central bank announced that it will renew a currency cooperation agreement with the People's Bank of China to swap US\$ 18.2 billion worth of each other's currencies. This amount represents staggering 42% of Argentina's stock of foreign reserves!⁴³

More generally, it is well known that China and Russia are viewed by Latin America's Bolivarian parties as "progressive" and "anti-imperialist" counterforce against Washington's pressure. Venezuela and Bolivia (until the overthrow of Evo Morales last year) have closely aligned to Beijing and Moscow and their supporters in Latin America shared their political accommodation to these emerging Great Powers. As we already noted, the PO has already capitulated to this pressure. It seems that the PTS/FT is following this trend and hopes to increase its opportunities for political realignment with such forces in this way.

Conclusions

We conclude by repeating that the "China question" represents one of the most important issues of world politics in the current historic period. As we have elaborated in our works, the historic period which opened in 2008 has been one of deepening crisis of capitalism with numerous dramatic events and revolutionary as well as counterrevolutionary upheavals.⁴⁴ In such a historic revolutionary period it is inevitable that the rivalry between the Great Powers accelerates massively and that the issue of war between imperialist states again becomes a key question. In such a period it is a political life and death question for a revolutionary organization to possess a correct theory in order to guide a correct practice.

Trotsky once observed that a theory is tested by political events and that this is particularly true in period of sharp clashes between states and classes. "*The vast practical importance of a correct theoretical orientation is most strikingly manifestos in a period of acute social conflict of rapid political shifts, of abrupt changes in the situation.*"⁴⁵ This statement is particularly relevant in the current world situation.

The failure of the PTS/FT to recognize the imperialist – or even the capitalist – character of China has massive consequences for its strategy and tactics. Understanding China's capitalist and imperialist character allows Marxists to take a position of revolutionary defeatism, i.e. to intransigently oppose *all* imperialist Great Powers – the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan.

The PTS/FT's inability to understand this capitalist and

imperialist character pushes this organization inevitable towards siding with China against the U.S. This means, that the PTS/FT is sliding into a position of pro-Chinese social-imperialism, i.e. a 4 August policy similar to the social-patriotic failure of European social democracy in 1914. We hope that the comrades of the PTS/FT will quickly open a discussion in their ranks and reverse such a disastrous position.

Footnotes

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Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry

The Factors behind the Accelerating Rivalry between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan.
A Critique of the Left's Analysis and an Outline of the Marxist Perspective

In *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry* Michael Pröbsting analyses the accelerating rivalry between the imperialist Great Powers – the U.S., China, EU, Russia, and Japan. He shows that the diplomatic rows, sanctions, trade wars, and military tensions between these Great Powers are not accidental or caused by a mad man in the White House. They are rather rooted in the fundamental contradictions of the capitalist system. This rivalry is a key feature of the current historic period and could, ultimately, result in major wars between these Great Powers.

Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry demonstrates the validity of the Marxist analysis of modern imperialism. Using comprehensive material (including 61 Tables and Figures), Michael Pröbsting elaborates that a correct understanding of the rise of China and Russia as new Great Powers is crucial for assessing the character of the current inter-imperialist rivalry.

In *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry* Michael Pröbsting critically discusses the analysis of modern imperialism by a number of left-wing parties (left social democrats, Stalinists, Trotskyists and others). He demon-

strates that most of these organizations fail to understand the nature of the Great Power rivalry and, consequently, are not able to take an internationalist and revolutionary stance.

The author elaborates the approach of leading Marxist figures like Lenin, Trotsky and Luxemburg to the problems of Great Power rivalry and imperialist aggression against oppressed peoples. He outlines a Marxist program for the current period which is essential for anyone who wants to change the world and bring about a socialist future.

The book contains an introduction and 29 chapters plus an appendix (412 pages) and includes 61 figures and tables. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry

The Factors behind the Accelerating Rivalry
between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan
A Critique of the Left's Analysis and
an Outline of the Marxist Perspective



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International

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Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice

Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of Organized Struggle for Bolshevism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a book called *BUILDING THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY IN THEORY AND PRACTICE*. The book's subtitle is: *Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of organized Struggle for Bolshevism*. The book is in English-language. It contains four chapters on 148 pages and includes 42 pictures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which give an overview of its content.

A few months ago, our movement commemorated its 25th anniversary. In the summer of 1989 our predecessor organization, the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI) was founded as a democratic-centralist international tendency based on an elaborated program. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) continues the revolutionary tradition of the LRCI. Below we give an overview of our history, an evaluation of its achievements as well as mistakes, and a summary of the lessons for the struggles ahead. This book summarizes our theoretical and practical experience of the past

25 years.

In Chapter I we outline a summary of the Bolshevik-Communists' theoretical conception of the role of the revolutionary party and its relation to the working class. In Chapter II we elaborate on the essential characteristics of revolutionary party respective of the pre-party organization. In Chapter III we deal with the history of our movement – the RCIT and its predecessor organization. Finally, in Chapter IV we outline the main lessons of our 25 years of organized struggle for building a Bolshevik party and their meaning for our future work.

You can find the contents and download the book for free at <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/rcit-party-building/> ■

**Building the
Revolutionary Party
in Theory
and Practice**

*Looking Back and Ahead after
25 Years of organized Struggle for Bolshevism*



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency

Turkey and the Growing Tensions in Eastern Mediterranean

Theses on the complex contradictions between imperialist and regional powers, the Arab Revolution and the consequential tactics of Marxists

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 28 August 2020

1. Tensions between imperialist and regional powers in Eastern Mediterranean are accelerating to such a degree that war in this region has become a realistic possibility for the first time since nearly half a century. The background of this development is a complex conglomeration of economic interests, the aggravating rivalry between various states and the ongoing process of the Arab Revolution.

2. The recent developments have been basically triggered by two important and concatenated developments. First, nearly all states in the region – Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, Israel, Egypt, and Libya – are interested in exploring and exploiting new oil and gas fields in the Eastern Mediterranean. Related to this are the interests of various imperialist Great Powers – particularly in the European Union – to secure access to these critical raw materials. The states' drive to control such new oil and gas reserves has undoubtedly been hastened by the depression of the capitalist world economy which started in late 2019.

3. The second reason for the growing tensions in Eastern Mediterranean is of political nature. The general decline of capitalism since the beginning of the current historic period in 2008 has resulted in the acceleration of contradictions not only between the imperialist Great Powers – U.S., China, EU, Russia and Japan – but also between regional powers in the Middle East. This development has become even more explosive since the beginning of the Arab Revolution in early 2011. This revolutionary process has seen partial victories (e.g. the fall of Ben Ali, Mubarak, Gaddafi and Saleh), severe defeats (most importantly the military coup in Egypt in July 2013) and ongoing liberation struggles (in particular the Syrian Revolution against the Russian-Iranian-Assadist occupation; also in Yemen against the Saudi/UAE invasion and in Libya against General Haftar's counterrevolution). Furthermore, the Arab Revolution has experienced a second wave of popular uprisings since early 2019 (e.g. Sudan, Algeria, Iraq and Lebanon). Likewise, there have been repeated mass protests in Iran against the capitalist Mullah regime. In addition, the Zionist state has continued its barbaric oppression of the Palestinian people, however without being able to crush their heroic resistance.

4. Against the background of the Arab Spring *two counterrevolutionary "Holy Alliances"* have been formed. One is the axis of Russian imperialism, Iran, Hezbollah and the Assad dictatorship; the other consists of Saudi-Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Egypt with the full support of US and Israeli imperialism. The interests of these alliances are in conflict with each other on some issues (e.g. Iran and control over the Persian Gulf; the civil war in Yemen) and concur on others. In particular they share the desire to crush the revolutionary process in Syria as well as in Libya. They all are driven by their determination to re-impose the pre-2011 tomblike silence in the Arab world dominated by relatively stable pro-imperialist dictatorships.

5. In Libya, the ruling class of Egypt, UAE, and Saudi

Arabia together with French and Russian imperialism are jointly supporting General Haftar – a corrupted warlord who worked first for Gaddafi and later for the CIA. Haftar has tried to overthrow the Libyan GNA government since 2014 and to impose totalitarian conditions like that existing in the Gulf monarchies or in Egypt since 2013. His opponent – the GNA government led by @Fayez al-Sarraj@ – is a bourgeoisified remnant of the revolutionary process which began in 2011.

6. In contrast to these two counterrevolutionary "Holy Alliances", some states hope to advance their interests by exploiting and materially aiding various liberation struggles. This is particularly the case with Turkey which lends limited support for the remaining liberation forces in Idlib (e.g. its brief military offensive in March this year) as well as for the Libyan GNA government (Turkey's drones played an important role in repelling Haftar's offensive in the last few months). Another example is Turkey's tacit support for exiled Muslim Brotherhood leaders who face persecution by the Egypt dictatorship. Qatar, an ally of Turkey, plays a similar role albeit to a more limited degree. One example of such support is Qatar's financial aid for Gaza dominated by Hamas. In reaction to the recent UAE-Israel deal, Turkey and Qatar signed a military pact on 17 August that provides for the deployment of their military personnel to Libya.

7. Naturally, Turkey's support is a tainted gift. In exchange for its material (including military) support, Ankara tries to get advantageous business deals. In addition, it attempts to increase its control over the Syrian liberation forces resp. the Libyan government. This is not only dangerous in itself as it liquidates the popular influence over the liberation forces. It is also harmful as the Erdoğan regime tries to advance its political and economic interests by striking deals with Russian as well as with American imperialism. A particularly dangerous trap, as the RCIT has repeatedly pointed out, is the so-called Astana/Sochi process which aims to liquidate the Syrian Revolution.

8. Tensions in Eastern Mediterranean have increased in recent months when, on one hand, Turkey increased its military aid for the Libyan GNA government and helped to successfully drive back the counter-revolutionary forces of General Haftar. This has caused alarm among the latter's allies Egypt, UAE, Saudi Arabia, France and Russia. General Sisi has even threatened to invade Libya. On the other hand, Turkey pushed the GNA government to sign a Maritime Boundary Treaty in November 2019 in order to establish an Exclusive Economic Zone. This deal – part of Ankara's "Mavi Vatan" doctrine ("Blue Homeland" in Turkish) – has caused massive protests and provoked Greece, Cyprus, Egypt, France and the UAE to issue a joint declaration on 11 May 2020. Israel also strongly opposes this deal. Recently, Greece and Egypt signed a maritime delimitation treaty. This deal cuts across the region staked out by the Libya-Turkey deal and has triggered a rapid acceleration of tensions. It also reflects the growing ties be-

tween Greece, Cyprus, Egypt and Israel with the backing of various European Great Powers (in particular France). In order to support its allies, France announced its plan to increase its military presence in the region. As a first step it sent Rafale fighter jets and the naval frigate 'Lafayette' to the Eastern Mediterranean. The UAE also sent some F-16 warplanes to Greece.

9. Athens, Paris and Brussels protest against the Turkish-Libyan deal by referring to the fact that the designated zone cuts through an area of the sea long claimed by Greece. While this is formally true, one has to take into account that these claims are based on the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. This treaty was forced upon Turkey by the imperialist Great Powers which at that time supported Greece and tried to keep the young republic in check. Hence, the treaty has been extremely unfair to Turkey as it gave almost all the islands of the Aegean Sea – the north-east extension of the Eastern Mediterranean – to Greece. Many of these islands, however, lie very close to Turkey's shore. As a result, these islands serve to extend Greece's maritime boundaries right up to and around the Turkish coast, leaving Ankara with little access to its surrounding waters.

10. In summary, all Mediterranean states try to advance their economic interests by exploring and exploiting new oil and gas fields. However, these interests do not exist in a vacuum but are imbedded in the concrete political conditions of the Middle East characterized by the process of the Arab Revolution and the formation of two counter-revolutionary "Holy Alliances". Under such conditions, the conflicts between states are not determined solely by "abstract" capitalist interests. They are also relevant for

the outcome of various legitimate democratic struggles. Hence, in defining the correct tactic of revolutionaries, all these calculations have to be taken into account.

11. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) has stated its support for the Arab Revolution from its very beginning in 2011 until today. Hence, we continue to support the ongoing liberation struggle against the Russian-Iranian-Assadist occupation. Likewise, we side with the Libyan GNA government – despite its character as a bourgeoisified remnant of the Libyan Revolution – against General Haftar's counterrevolution. We support any material (including military) aid to the progressive forces in these struggles. However, we oppose any political conditions linked to such support. Concretely, we welcome any military aid by Turkey to the Syrian rebels as well as to the Libyan GNA government but we reject the political conditions attached to this.

12. The conflict in Eastern Mediterranean between Turkey on one hand and Greece, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, France and the UAE on the other hand has a multiple character. To a certain degree it represents sheer rivalry of states which all want to grab as much oil and gas resources as possible. However, this rivalry is intertwined with a) the desire of European imperialists as well as Israel to control the Eastern Mediterranean and b) the process of the Arab Revolution and the attempts of the two counter-revolutionary "Holy Alliances" to smash the ongoing liberation struggles in the whole region. In addition, public hostility against Turkey plays an important role for EU governments to advocate their Islamophobia – a crucial ideological element for the national and religious oppression of millions of Muslim migrants in Europe.

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: World Perspectives 2018 - A World Pregnant With Wars And Popular Uprisings

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new English-language book – WORLD PERSPECTIVES 2018: A WORLD PREGNANT WITH WARS AND POPULAR UPRISINGS. The book's subtitle is: Theses on the World Situation, the Perspectives for Class Struggle and the Tasks of Revolutionaries.

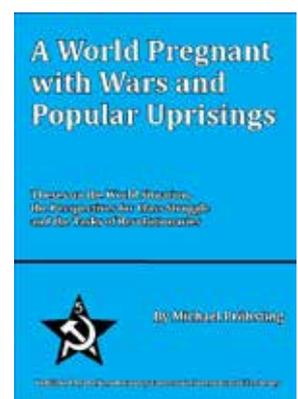
This book is a major contribution of our organization to keep the Marxists' analysis of the world situation and its accelerating contradictions updated. As we emphasize in the document, we consider it as crucial for revolutionaries to understand the nature and the inner dynamics of the current historic period. Without such an understanding it is impossible for socialists, indeed for all liberation fighters, to possess the necessary political compass on which they can base their program, strategy and tactics.

Since several years does the RCIT publish annual studies on the world situation in which it analyzes its most important developments and changes. This book updates the Marxist analysis of the state of the world economy, of the relations between the Great Powers, of the struggle between the classes and the tactics of revolutionaries. We also deal in depth with new issues respectively extend our theoretical analysis on several questions. In particular we have deepened in this book,

among others, our understanding of the nature respectively the transitional character of the present world political phase, of the nature of different types of wars and the tactical conclusions arriving from this, of the complex nature of the conflicts in the Middle East, of the capitalist restoration in North Korea and, finally, we have elaborated a new proposal for an international platform for the unification of revolutionary forces in the present phase.

The book contains a preface, introduction and seven eight chapters plus an appendix (118 pages) and includes 23 figures , 9 tables and 2 maps. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

You can find the contents and download the book for free at <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-perspectives-2018/>



13. As the RCIT has explained in various documents, Turkey is an industrially advanced semi-colony, i.e. a capitalist state which takes a subordinated position in a world dominated by imperialist monopolies and Great Powers. Contrary to claims by various pseudo-leftists it is neither an imperialist nor a “sub-imperialist” state. However, the Erdoğan regime tries to exploit the accelerating rivalry between the Great Powers – in particular between the U.S., the EU, Russia and China – to have space to manoeuvre and to advance its own capitalist interests. We have pointed out these complex factors in past documents: “Given the semi-colonial character of the bourgeoisie of such countries, they are dependent on and subordinated to the imperialist powers. However, while they can not act independently of imperialist powers in the long run, this does not necessarily mean that they have no independent interests at all or that they would have no limited independent room for manoeuvre at all. The capitalist class of the given state often attempts to utilize the conflict between the imperialist powers and to create a space to expand their influence. The Erdoğan regime in Turkey is an example for this as it tries to play off Russia, the U.S. and the EU.” (RCIT: World Perspectives 2018, Thesis 23)

14. In terms of domestic politics, the Erdoğan regime is a government based on a bourgeois-parliamentary system which increasingly takes bonapartist features. However, calling it “fascist” as many Stalinists are doing is a silly caricature of the very term. Furthermore, another important feature of Erdoğan’s domestic policy is the intensified national oppression of the Kurdish minority. Revolutionaries in Turkey fight for a workers and poor peasant republic and the unconditional right of national self-determination for the Kurdish people.

15. As we have shown above, Turkey’s foreign policy – driven by political and economic capitalist interests of its own bourgeoisie – comes into conflict with the interests of the imperialist EU as well as of the two counter-revolutionary “Holy Alliances”. This has been the case in Syria, in Libya as well as in the current maritime conflict. So while the governments of most states advance their interests by aiding the Arab counterrevolution, Turkey is sometimes obligated – out of their own capitalist interests – to obstruct these counter-revolutionary forces and to objectively aid (in a very limited and treacherous way) forces involved in liberation struggles.

16. In the case of a conflict of Turkey with an imperialist enemy (e.g. Russia, France or Israel) it is self-explaining that revolutionaries support the former. In the case of conflicts between semi-colonial states, Marxists have to analyze the concrete circumstances as we have elaborated above. However, for reasons explained above, in confrontations between Turkey on one side and Greece, Egypt or UAE on the other side, it is quite possible that revolutionaries might be obligated to take the side of Turkey and to advocate the defeat of its opponents. Likewise, as the RCIT explained repeatedly, revolutionaries will have to side with Iran – despite the reactionary nature of its regime – in conflicts with Israel or with Arab allies of U.S. imperialism (e.g. Saudi Arabia and UAE).

17. There was a similar situation three years ago when Saudi Arabia and UAE launched an aggression against Qatar. At that time, the RCIT sided with Qatar as we explained at that time: “For example in the case of the Saudi/UAE aggression against Qatar since summer 2017, we defended

the later despite the fact that formally all sides are semi-colonial states. However, as we explained in our literature, under the concrete circumstances the Saudi aggression had a thoroughly reactionary character since it was attacking Qatar because of the later support for legitimate resistance movement fighting against imperialist occupation and dictatorship (e.g. Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood, the Palestinian Hamas, Syrian rebels or the Afghan Taliban), because of its support of the TV channel Al-Jazeera as well as because of its opposition to the US, Israeli and Saudi war drive against Iran. In short, the Saudi aggression against Qatar was part of Riyadh’s efforts to completely liquidate all obstacles for the establishment of a stable and thoroughly pro-US and pro-Israeli counter-revolutionary order in the region.” (RCIT: World Perspectives 2018, Thesis 27)

18. The military tactics of Marx and Engels in Europe in the second half of the 19th century are highly instructive for the issue under discussion, i.e. for wars between semi-colonial countries. At that time they identified Tsarist Russia (which together with the monarchies of Prussia and Austria-Hungary constituted the “Holy Alliance”) as the main enemy of the liberation struggle of the European working class and oppressed people. Hence they advocated a “revolutionary people’s war” against Russia during the 1848/49 Revolution as a kind of foreign policy equivalent to the strategy of permanent revolution in domestic affairs. „If the Prussians ally themselves with the Russians, the Germans will ally themselves with the French and united they will wage the war of the West against the East, of civilisation against barbarism, of the republic against autocracy. We want the unification of Germany. Only as the result of the disintegration of the large German monarchies, however, can the elements of this unity crystallise. They will be welded together only by the stress of war and revolution.“ (Karl Marx / Friedrich Engels: Threat of the Gervinus Zeitung (1848); in: MECW Vol. 7, p. 116) While the revolution was defeated, Marx and Engels continued to view the Holy Alliance as the main obstacle for the liberation struggle in Europe. Hence, they took the side of the enemies of Tsarist Russia in subsequent wars and even urged these countries to wage the war against Russia more energetically (e.g. of England and France in the Crimean War 1853-56 or of Turkey in 1877-78).

19. Similarly, the RCIT supports the Arab Revolution and calls for its transformation into a process of *permanent revolution* until the workers and poor peasants overthrow the regimes and take power, expropriate the bourgeoisie and expel the imperialist powers from the whole region. We call for a *single Intifada in the entire Middle East* – from Baghdad and Beirut, Idlib, Tripoli, Sana’a, Gaza, Cairo, Algiers, Khartoum to Teheran – as the way forward to the *Socialist Federation of the Middle East!* Such a process will also include “revolutionary people’s wars” against imperialist forces, the Zionist state and against Arab dictatorships. In fact, solving the democratic and social tasks of the permanent revolution necessitates not only a civil war against the domestic bourgeoisie but, equally, also wars against counterrevolutionary forces and imperialist states abroad. The whole conception of permanent revolution – as it was fully elaborated by Leon Trotsky – is based on the notion that there exists no Chinese Wall between the domestic and the foreign tasks of the liberation struggle but that they are rather an integrated part of the totality of the revolutionary program. “The second aspect of the ‘perma-

nent' theory has to do with the socialist revolution as such. For an indefinitely long time and in constant internal struggle, all social relations undergo transformation. (...). Outbreaks of civil war and foreign wars alternate with periods of 'peaceful' reform. (...) Therein lies the permanent character of the socialist revolution as such." (Leon Trotsky: *The Permanent Revolution* (1929), Pathfinder Press, New York 1969, pp. 132-133) Attacking, weakening and overthrowing the enemy at home can help to defeat the enemy abroad. And attacking, weakening and defeating the enemy abroad can help to overthrow the enemy at home. This is also, we note in passing, the ultimate logic behind the Bolshevik's famous strategy of „the conversion of the imperialist war into a civil war“.

20. As long as the workers and oppressed have not yet taken power – i.e. as long as the bourgeoisie is still the ruling class – Marxists have to analyze each conflict between semi-colonial countries concretely in order to elaborate their tactics. They are obligated to judge if the defeat of this or that side is advantageous for the interests of the revolution, if it is the lesser evil from the point of view of the international working class – or if the oppressed have no side to choose and must oppose all war parties equally. Revolutionaries also need to derive from such an analysis if they call a state to enter a war. Likewise, such an analysis will inform them if they shall advocate such tactics as a “slogan of the day” or if they shall limit themselves to make general propaganda for such tactics. By the way, such differentiation – between advocating a tactic as a “slogan of the day” or rather educating the vanguard via general propaganda – is always necessary; not only in

the case of war but also when it comes to other tactics like mass demonstrations, general strike, armed uprising, etc.

21. It is an integral component of the process of building the *Revolutionary World Party* – the most important instrument of the proletariat in its liberation struggle – to combine theoretical analysis and revolutionary principles with a concrete assessment of each and every situation in its totality and derive the resulting tactics from it. Marxists can provide the vanguard with a correct orientation in stormy periods of wars and revolutions only if they proof capable in applying such a dialectical approach concretely in each and every situation. This is even more relevant in the current phase where revolutionary Marxists are still in the stage of building nuclei of revolutionary parties and where they must build roots among the vanguard of the working class and the oppressed.

International Secretariat of the RCIT

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The RCIT has published a number of documents on the second wave of the Arab Revolution that can be accessed on a special sub-section of this website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/collection-of-articles-on-2nd-wave-of-great-arab-revolution/>.

See also the compilation of our documents on the Syrian Revolution here: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/collection-of-articles-on-the-syrian-revolution/>

Books of the RCIT

Yossi Schwartz: Palestine and Zionism

The History of Oppression of the Palestinian People.

A Critical Account of the Myths of Zionism

In *Palestine and Zionism* Yossi Schwartz provides a critical analysis of numerous Zionist myths about the Jews as well as about the Palestinians. He demonstrates that the Zionist claim that Palestine is the historic homeland of the Jews lacks any serious basis.

Palestine and Zionism shows that the history of Zionism in the 20th century is a history of colonialism in the service of the Great Powers and directed against the native population – the Arabs.

In *Palestine and Zionism* Yossi Schwartz deals with key events – the “Nakba” in 1948, the wars in 1956, 1967 and 1973, more recent events like the Lebanon War, etc. – which were decisive for the expulsion of most Palestinians from their homeland.

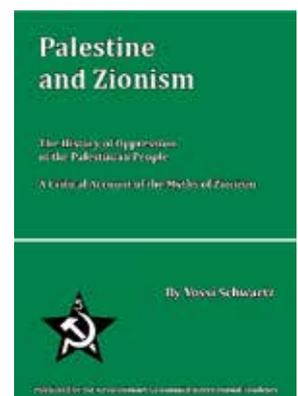
Yossi Schwartz also shows that the Palestinian people have heroically resisted against the occupation resulting in two Intifadas as well as the successful defense of Gaza against the Israeli aggression in three wars (2008/09, 2012, 2014). The author also analysis the shameful betrayal by the PLO leadership by signing the Oslo Agreement in 1993.

In *Palestine and Zionism* Yossi Schwartz defends the right of national self-determination for the Palestinian people and outlines

a socialist perspective. He emphasizes that the only solution is the right of millions of Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland and to replace the Zionist entity with one democratic state from the river to the sea – a *Free Red Palestine* with equal civil rights to the Arabs and the Israeli Jews.

The book contains an introduction and 7 chapters (112 pages) and includes 7 Tables and 3 Maps. The author of the book is Yossi Schwartz, a leading member of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency and its section in Israel / Occupied Palestine..

You can find the contents and download the book for free at <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/palestine-and-zionism/>



Mr. Ichlov's Truth Barometer

A reply to a polemic against the RCIT by the Russian left-wing journalist Boris Ichlov

By Michael Pröbsting and Petr Sedov, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 7 September 2020

Recently, the Russian journalist Boris Ichlov published a vulgar polemic against the RCIT, titled – with unintended irony – *“Be Able To Distinguish Truth From Lies”*.¹ According to the author our organization has capitulated to U.S. imperialism and the liberal bourgeoisie. This is all the more damning because, as the title already indicates, it is so easy to recognize the truth.

We don't want to deny that it is not too difficult for Marxists to recognize the truth. Unfortunately, the article reveals that this is too much of a challenge for Mr. Ichlov. However, this does not shatter his self-confidence. He claims to have found a simple method to recognize the truth. We admit it is really very simple. Maybe too simple?

The author explains the method and superiority of his truth barometer right at the beginning of the nearly 1,800 words article. *“We have a strong rejection of liberals. They are an indicator for us: if the liberals support the truck drivers' strike, it means that the case is not clean. If liberals talk about police violence in Russia, it means that the case is not clean. If the liberals talk about an uprising in Khabarovsk, it means that there is no uprising there. Second, we are Marxists. Therefore, the main indicator for us is the main imperialist of the world, the world gendarme, the United States. If Washington supports the Kosovo Albanians and talks about ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, it means that there has never been ethnic cleansing in Kosovo.”*

And so it goes on. *“Washington announced that Milosevic is a dictator who is carrying out ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. And we understand that there is no ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. Washington trumpets the tragedy in Srebrenica, the death of the majority of the population of Srebrenica. But the election campaign started in Srebrenica, and the dead all rose from their graves and came to vote!”*

“Washington announced the September 11 terrorist attack, but no trace of the plane allegedly hit the Pentagon was found.”

“Washington declared that Gaddafi is a dictator. And we saw brand-new rifles from warehouses in the United States in the hands of Libyan “revolutionaries.”

“Washington appointed al-Assad a dictator. And we understand that the goal of this lie is the project of a gas pipeline from Qatar through Syria, along with Syrian oil. The “proletarian revolution” in Egypt was announced. And in Egypt, Islamic fundamentalists came to power.”

“Washington, Berlin, and Warsaw support the Belarusian opposition. And we understand that there is no uprising of the people against the dictator Lukashenko in Belarus.”

The wisdom of Pavlov's Dog

We could continue this list of similar quotes but we don't want to torture the intelligence of our readers. The whole article is based on such crude logic. If Washington says A, the truth must be B. If CNN states that the planet is round, it can only mean that the Earth is flat. The whole method of Mr. Ichlov consists of automatically making a plus where Washington makes a minus. It is the wisdom of Pavlov's Dog. When it hears “Washington”, it barks. Case closed. So simple is Mr. Ichlov's truth barometer!

In the early 11th century, Pierre Abelard – a great Christian theologian and the *“first intellectual of the Middle Ages”* (Jaques Le Goff) – tried to introduce elements of rationalism in the mystic world of Catholic dogmatism. He proclaimed *“intelligo ut credam”* (I Know in Order to Believe), i.e. one needs a rational comprehension of the world in order to believe.² Sadly, people like Mr. Ichlov have turned this upside down. They limit themselves to uncritical dogmas and hope by such that they could understand the world. In other words, they fall back to the intellectual horizon of the most dogmatic theologians – like so many other Stalinist ideologists.

How can it be the case that it so obvious for reasonable persons that there have been massacres against the Kosova Albanians³, the Bosnian Muslims⁴, that there have been popular uprisings from Libya⁵ to Belarus⁶, that 9/11⁷ was no fake, etc.? Of course, our expert in truth has also an explanation for this. It is because the imperialist enemy is particularly clever in covering its trace! Is this not obvious?! Stalin already knew that! Just remember the bizarre lies which the bureaucratic dictatorship announced about Trotsky, Rakovsky, Zinoviev, Bukharin, and many other former leaders of the Bolshevik party during the Moscow show trials. When the whole world could not believe Vyshinsky's hysterical accusations that these revolutionaries should have been “agents of Hitler” and other enemies of the Soviet people for years and decades, Stalin claimed that this was difficult to recognize because these were *“great conspirators”*. Mr. Ichlov – irrespective of his verbal anti-Stalinism in the past – positively refers in his article to the dictator as an authority for his case: *“Stalin explained to Feuchtwanger why there is no physical evidence of the crimes of Bukharin, Trotsky, Ryutin, and others – because they have passed the school of the underground, they are great conspirators and leave no traces behind them!”*

And, in fact, this positive reference to Stalin and his outlook is highly indicative for Ichlov's own world view. It is the most vulgar schematism, completely free from dialectic, facts and figures. Unsurprisingly, Mr. Ichlov's truth is relevant only in his little “intellectual” bubble.

It is characteristic for the failure of the author's truth barometer that he completely confuses the history of the RCIT. He claims: *“The intellectual level of data Trotskyists-below the plinth, however, as with all Trotskyists. But this is the first time I have seen such cattle, I did not know that there are macaques in Italy. The group was founded in 1983 as the international Bureau for the revolutionary party as a result of a joint initiative of the Internationalist Communist party (Battaglia Comunista) from Italy and the Communist workers' organization (CWO) from great Britain. Other affiliated organizations were the Internationalist working group from the United States and Canada, the group of internationalist socialists (Gruppe Internationaler SozialistInnen) from Germany, and a small French section.”*

As a matter of fact, the groups which he names have nothing to do with the RCIT – and never had! These organizations are not Trotskyists and never claimed such. As a two

minute research in Google would have revealed (but Mr. Ichlov probably refuses to use Google as it is an American and not a national machine!), these forces stand in the political tradition of Amadeo Bordiga, an Italian revolutionary with strong characteristics of sectarianism and ultra-leftism. The RCIT never had any relationship with these forces so we simply have no idea why our truth-loving Mr. Ichlov comes up with such inventions! May be his truth barometer has a small defect? ⁸

Unfortunately, this is not an exceptional case where our expert in truth creates his own truth, or – to put it in everyday language – distorts it. To give another example: in his article Mr. Ichlov presents the comrades of the Russian MGKP – with whom the RCIT had fraternal relations in 2018-19 – as uncritical supporters of *Confederation of Labor of Russia* (KTR). He presents a quote from an interview with them in order to twist its meaning. “More: ‘if we consider those that actively defend the economic interests of workers as fighting unions: in particular, they promote and use strikes as a means of struggle, then Yes, we can say that there are such unions - the Confederation of labor of Russia (KTR).’” From this Mr. Ichlov concludes: “Aha. It was the KTR, together with the FNPR, that signed a tripartite agreement with the authorities and employers to resolve labor conflicts without strikes. That is why rplbzh (sic!) out of CTE. However, after that, he never held a single strike.”

However, if one reads the full paragraph from which Mr. Ichlov took a single sentence, the real meaning of the Russian comrades’ statement becomes pretty clear. “If we count independent trade unions there are those who are active in fighting for the economic interests of workers. An example for a union which propagates and uses strikes as means of fight, is the trade union Confederation of Labour of Russia (KTR). However, is it really independent from the ruling class we’ll see if we take the following example: the president of KTR, Boris Kravchenko, wrote at the end of 2011 about the killing of protesting oil com-

pany workers in Zhanaozen (West Kazakhstan) and blamed the Committee for Workers’ International (CWI) for the provocation of Kazakhstan authorities of such actions. We have another example – the political evolution of the famous trade union activist Alexei Etmanov (Interregional Trade Union “Worker Association” (MPRA)). First he “always supported Communist Party of Russian Federation during elections”, later he guaranteed that the A Just Russia Party will receive the vote of all four thousand MPRA members and their families and at last he joined the electoral list of Yabloko party at the last election. What does this say about the independence of these forces?!” ⁹

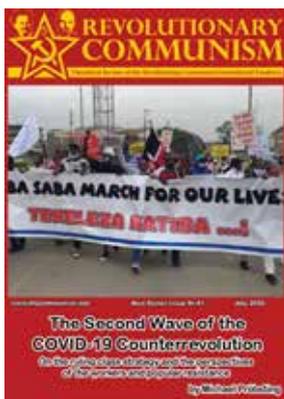
As we can see, in contrast to Mr. Ichlov’s claim, the MGKP never uncritically supported the KTR. However, it seems to be asking too much for a Moscow State University post-graduate in theoretical physics to present a quote in full! Furthermore, since Mr. Ichlov should be able to read Russian, he could have seen himself that this organization not only criticized the KTR leadership but also other left-wing groups for hiding the tripartite agreement.

The cancer of Russian social-imperialism

Anyway, why does Mr. Ichlov attack the RCIT? The reasons seems to be, as the references of his article indicate, that we are an international organization (including comrades in Russia) and that we are enemies not only of Western imperialism but also of its Russian and Chinese rivals.

Mr. Ichlov comes from a political tradition opposed to Stalinism as he considers the USSR to have been state-capitalist (and not a “degenerated workers state” as we Trotskyists view it ¹⁰). When he was younger, in the 1980s and early 1990s, he was a member in left-wing organizations like the Perm-based “Union of Communists” and its successor, the “Worker’s Union”, and later the “Confederation of Labor”, the “Party of Labour” and OPOR.

However, this was a long time ago! Today Mr. Ichlov’s



Publications of the RCIT

The Second Wave of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution

On the ruling class strategy in the current conjuncture, its inner contradictions and the perspectives of the workers and popular resistance

By Michael Pröbsting, July 2020

Introduction * The localized version of Lockdown policy is spreading * New information concerning severity (or not so severity) of the pandemic * Telling figures for Europe, Sweden and Ischgl * The worst pandemic in Africa? Really? * Capitalism and care homes as deadly traps for old people * The real nature of the ruling class bonapartist offensive under the cover of COVID-19 * Why is the ruling class opting for a local lockdown strategy? * Excuse: A crisis characteristic for the present period of capitalist decay * The nature and inner contradictions of the local lockdown strategy * Preparing for a new counter-revolutionary offensive * The Lockdown Left: a never ending embarrassment * The shameful example of the PSTU/LIT-CI * The imperialist aristocratism of the Lockdown Left * Building a Revolutionary World Party * Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 20 pages, A4 Format

fantasizes about the “*idiotism of contemporary Trotskyism*”¹¹ and makes the political outlook of Stalinism his own. While he verbally attacks Stalinism for its patriotism, he himself is infected by this cancer and parades as a Russian patriot and a staunch defender of his motherland. He denies the fact that Russia has become an imperialist power and claims that it is rather a “peripheral” capitalist country. This is simple a grotesque caricature of the real class character of Russia! As the RCIT has demonstrated in numerous works, Russia has emerged as an imperialist power in the past two decades.¹²

Based on such a topsy turvy reality, Mr. Ichlov shares the widespread conception among Russian reformists and centrists that Russia is not an imperialist power. This idea is not new and has its historical roots in the Stalinist bureaucracy (and bourgeois Pan-Slavism before). It declared in the 1930s that Russia was not an imperialist power before the socialist October Revolution in 1917 but rather a “semi-colony”.¹³ This was in clear contradiction to the long-standing analysis of Lenin and the Bolshevik party – which was upheld in the 1920s by the school of Marxist historians led by M.N. Pokrovsky – who insisted that Russia was imperialist.¹⁴

It is a tragedy that large sectors of the Russian left – Stalinist as well as non-Stalinist – have picked up the theoretical legacy of Stalinism and deny the imperialist character of this Great Power. As a result, they view Putin’s foreign policy primarily as a kind of defensive reaction to the aggression of U.S. imperialism. Consequently, they side – openly or in disguise – with their “fatherland” against “imperialism” (i.e. the Western rivals). As we have analyzed in much detail in our book on the Great Power rivalry, all these theories practically result in shameful versions of Russian social-imperialism, i.e. the defense of the imperialist fatherland under the cloak of “anti-imperialism” and “socialism”.¹⁵

Mr. Ichlov’s Russian social-patriotism leads him also to denounce the policy of “*korenizatsiya*”. This was the Bolshevik’s nationality policy in the early period of the USSR which advocated the “indigenization”, i.e. the promotion of language, education, and development of the non-Russian people. Unsurprisingly Mr. Ichlov, as a proud Great Russian, strongly dislikes the policy of “*korenizatsiya*” and even criticizes Stalin for it. He claims that this policy was responsible for the current problems in the Ukraine. “*Plus to this - the Stalinist policy of indigenization, in particular, Ukrainization. Transfer of Russian regions, incl. Donbass Ukraine. We have seen the consequences.*”¹⁶

However, despite Stalin’s involvement in the politics of *korenizatsya*, this was supported by all party factions. The first decree – “*On implementation of the Ukrainization of the educational and cultural institutions*” (27 July 1923) – was adopted in response to Lenin’s and Trotsky’s attacks against the Great Russian chauvinist policy promoted by Stalin and his allies.¹⁷

Self-Flagellation on the Chechen question

Mr. Ichlov Russian patriotism and social-imperialism causes him to strongly dislike the RCIT and its Russian comrades. To the annoyance of Mr. Ichlov, the RCIT dares to state that “*the Russian Federation is an imperialist state.*” He is also outraged by our statement that “*the Chechen*

people have been fighting an irreconcilable struggle for independence for centuries.” Is it not obvious that the Chechens wanted to “*create a Wahhabi state*”?¹⁸

In fact, the Chechen question is symbolic for the drastic shift to the right by Mr. Ichlov and many other Russian left-wing intellectuals. In the 1990s he and his organization openly supported the right for national self-determination of Chechen people. During the first Chechen war in 1994-96, even the arch-Stalinist Victor Anpilov took a defeatist position and refused to support the Russian aggressor. But this was a long time ago, and today Mr. Ichlov is highly self-critical about his internationalist past as he has become a vulgar Russian social-patriot.

“*However, on the whole nothing has foreshadowed upcoming disaster. The left, including our Union of Communists (later OPOR), even approvingly reacted to the national movements, since our enemy was common - the bourgeois elite of the CPSU. Workers from the Baltic States came to the RSFSR and participated on equal terms in rallies and meetings of the left. How could the left not adhere to the right of nations to self-determination, legalized by Lenin and enshrined in the Constitution?*”¹⁹

The Syrian people “are grateful to Russia”?

Worse, the RCIT even sides with the Arab Revolution and the popular uprising of the Syrian people – an Anathema for Stalinism and many other Islamophobic “leftists” in West and East.²⁰ Mr. Ichlov is outraged that the RCIT “*seriously believe that the Russian Federation is intervening in Syria!*” Surely, Russia’s Khmeimim Air Base and its naval facility in Tartus, the mercenaries of Wagner PMC, the indiscriminate bombing and killing of Syrian civilians by Russian warplanes, etc. are also inventions by the CNN! Mr. Ichlov can’t understand why we Trotskyists don’t recognize that the Syrian people welcome the “help” of their “Russian brother”. “*The vast majority of the population of Syria is grateful to the Russian troops who protect it from American bandits and from ISIL.*”²¹

Well, in fact the Syrian people “welcomed” the Russian troops with the same “enthusiasm” as the Chechen welcomed them in 1994-96 and 1999-2009: they did everything to give them a bloody nose as much as possible!!

But according to Mr. Ichlov, the Syrian – as well as the Libyan people – were completely happy with “their leader” and had no reason to rise up! “*Revolutions occur, Lenin explained, when the upper classes cannot govern in the old way, and the lower classes can no longer live in the old way. Was it in Syria, where the standard of living was higher than in Russia, where, like in Libya, there were a lot of benefits for the population? Of course not! Revolutions begin, Lenin explained, when the masses are suddenly impoverished beyond the ordinary. Was it in Syria? No.*”²²

As we can see, social-chauvinism not only makes people like Mr. Ichlov blind but also ignorant. It is well known that the living conditions of the masses in Syria – and the whole Arab world – had dramatically deteriorated as a result of the Great Recession in 2008/09. “*Daraa, the largest city in the Hawran valley, located just a few kilometres from the Jordanian border, was already deeply impoverished due to the depletion of water resources, forcing some farmers to turn from the agricultural sector to opening chicken farms. In early March 2011, just days before protests broke out, an International Crisis Group team reported that “local residents warned of an explo-*

sive situation; any spark might cause it to detonate.”²³

In summary, Mr. Ichlov’s indignation about the RCIT is understandable. We stand on opposite sides of the barricade. The RCIT opposes all imperialist Great Powers in West and East. Mr. Ichlov and similar-minded social-patriots side with Russia against its Western rivals. The RCIT supports the Arab Revolution and the popular uprising of the Syrian people since 2011. Mr. Ichlov and similar-minded “socialists” side with the local bourgeois dictatorships and their imperialist backers. Mr. Ichlov can invent as many truth barometers as he likes, he can not hide the fact that he is a staunch supporter of the camp of Russian imperialism.

In 1924 a flood swept St. Petersburg, nearly killing the dogs in the basement of Pavlov and it was his assistant who saved the animals from drowning. Mr. Ichlov can only hope for such a loyalty from *his* Russian imperialist master.

Footnotes

1 Boris Ichlov: Be Able To Distinguish Truth From Lies, 1 September 2020, <https://www.facebook.com/boris.ichlov/posts/3252584258163316>. This article has been published in English language. We are not aware if a Russian language version of this article does also exist. All quotes from Mr. Ichlov, if not referred otherwise, are from this article.

2 See on this e.g. Jaques Le Goff: Die Intellektuellen im Mittelalter, Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, München 1986, pp. 41-55; Jürgen Kuczynski: Die Intelligenz. Studien zur Soziologie und Geschichte ihrer Großen, Akademi-Verlag, Berlin 1987, pp. 189-196

3 On the RCIT’s analysis of Kosova see e.g. Johannes Wiener and Ime Berisha: Freedom and Self-Determination for Kosova! Down with the Government of Isa Mustafa Hashim Thaçi, Lackeys for the Rich and Imperialism! 31.01.2015, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/freedom-for-kosova/>

4 On the RCIT’s analysis of Bosnia and the Balkan Wars see e.g. Almedina Gunić: Bosnia: Never forget Srebrenica - learn the lessons for today! August 2012, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/bosnia-war/>; Michael Pröbsting: International Workers Aid: Our Solidarity Work with the Liberation Struggle of Bosnia in 1992-95, 11.2.2014, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/bosnia-international-workers-aid/>

5 On the RCIT’s analysis of the Libyan Revolution see e.g. RCIT: Libya: Defend Tripoli! Defeat Haftar! For Popular Militias to organize an independent struggle against the counterrevolution! 9 April 2019, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/libya-defend-tripoli-defeat-haftar/>; RCIT: Stop the US Bombing of Libya! Mobilize against the Expansion of the Imperialist War! Defeat the Imperialist Aggressors and Their Lackeys in Libya! 23.2.2016, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/us-bombing-libya/>; RCIT: General Sisi, Hollande, Obama: Hands Off Libya! Defeat General Hafter’s Imperialist Lackeys! Down with the Daash-Gang of Killers! For a Workers’ and Popular Government! 26.2.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/hands-off-libya/>; Michael Pröbsting: Liberation Struggles and Imperialist Interference. The failure of sectarian “anti-imperialism” in the West: Some general considerations from the Marxist point of view and the example of the democratic revolution in Libya in 2011, in *Revolutionary Communism* No. 5 (2012), <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/liberation-struggle-and-imperialism/>; RKOB: After the collapse of the Gaddafi regime: Where now for the Libyan Revolution? in *Revolutionary Communism* No. 1 (2011), <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/libya-collapse-of-gaddafi-regime/>; Michael Pröbsting: The

intervention of the imperialist powers in Libya, the struggle of the masses against Gaddafi’s dictatorship and the tactics of revolutionary communists, in *Revolutionary Communism* No. 1 (2011), www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa/libya-revolutionary-tactics

6 On the RCIT’s analysis of the uprising in Belarus see: Open Letter to Belarusian Workers. Down with Lukashenko’s regime! Advance the class struggle to achieve workers’ democracy and overthrow imperialism! For the general strike!, 15 August 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/open-letter-to-belarusian-workers/>; Открытое письмо белорусским рабочим. Долой режим Лукашенко! За продвижение классовой борьбы для достижения рабочей демократии и свержения империализма! За всеобщую стачку! <https://www.thecommunists.net/home/%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%B9/%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%BA%D1%80%D1%8B%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%B5-%D0%BF%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%8C%D0%BC%D0%BE-%D0%B1%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%BE%D1%80%D1%83%D1%81%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%BC-%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B1%D0%BE%D1%87%D0%B8%D0%BC/>

7 For our statement on the 9/11 event see Statement on 9/11 Attacks. Fight imperialist hypocrisy! Reject individual terrorism! Stop US military retaliation! 13.09.2001, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/north-america/resolution-on-9-11/>

8 For an overview of the history of our movement see e.g. Michael Pröbsting: Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice. Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of Organized Struggle for Bolshevism, Vienna 2014, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/rcit-party-building/>

9 Interview with Marxist Group “Class Politics” (MGKP) to “Revolutionary Communist International Tendency”, 6 November 2017, <https://mgkp.github.io/blog/en/2017/11/06/interview>

10 For our analysis of Stalinism see e.g. Michael Pröbsting: Cuba’s Revolution Sold Out? The Road from Revolution to the Restoration of Capitalism, August 2013, RCIT Books, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/cuba-s-revolution-sold-out/>. See also LRCI: The Degenerated Revolution: The Origin and Nature of the Stalinist States, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/stalinism-and-the-degeneration-of-the-revolution/>.

11 Борис Ихлов: О ЛИБЕРАЛИЗМЕ ТРОЦКИСТОВ И СТАЛИНИСТОВ ИЛИ О СТАЛИНИСТСКО-ТРОЦКИСТСКОЙ СУЩНОСТИ ЛИБЕРАЛИЗМА, Российское политобъединение «Рабочий», 30.8.2020, <https://proza.ru/2020/08/30/938>, <https://www.facebook.com/boris.ichlov/posts/3218961828192226>

12 On the RCIT’s analysis of Russia’s rise as emerging imperialist powers see, in addition to the literature mentioned in the special sub-section on our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-russia-as-imperialist-powers/>, the following works: Michael Pröbsting: Lenin’s Theory of Imperialism and the Rise of Russia as a Great Power. On the Understanding and Misunderstanding of Today’s Inter-Imperialist Rivalry in the Light of Lenin’s Theory of Imperialism, August 2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialism-theory-and-russia/>; Michael Pröbsting: Russia as a Great Imperialist Power. The formation of Russian Monopoly Capital and its Empire – A Reply to our Critics, 18 March 2014, Special Issue of *Revolutionary Communism* No. 21 (March 2014), <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialist-russia/>. See also chapter V, VI, VII and IX of our book by Michael Pröbsting: *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry*. The Factors behind the Accelerating Rivalry between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan. A Critique of the Left’s Analysis and an Outline of the Marxist Perspective, RCIT Books, January 2019, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/anti-imperialism-in-the-age-of-great-power-rivalry/>.

13 Instructed by Stalin, the Russian historians in the 1930s were forced rewrite the Marxist analysis of Russia’s class character. Such, the notorious “*Short Course*” stated: “*That Russia entered*

the imperialist war on the side of the Entente, on the side of France and Great Britain, was not accidental. It should be borne in mind that before 1914 the most important branches of Russian industry were in the hands of foreign capitalists, chiefly those of France, Great Britain and Belgium, that is, the Entente countries. The most important of Russia's metal works were in the hands of French capitalists. In all, about three-quarters (72 per cent) of the metal industry depended on foreign capital. The same was true of the coal industry of the Donetz Basin. Oilfields owned by British and French capital accounted for about half the oil output of the country. A considerable part of the profits of Russian industry flowed into foreign banks, chiefly British and French. All these circumstances, in addition to the thousands of millions borrowed by the tsar from France and Britain in loans, chained tsardom to British and French imperialism and converted Russia into a tributary, a semi-colony of these countries." (History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks): Short Course, Edited by a Commission of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U.(B.), International Publishers, New York 1939, p. 162. Another edition of the same book, published by the Foreign Languages Publishing House in Moscow in 1945, contains the same formulation on the same page.)

14 A number of his works have been translated into English and German language: M. N. Pokrovskii: Russia in World History; Selected Essays, Edited by Roman Szporluk, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor 1970; M. Pokrowski: Geschichte Russlands von seiner Entstehung bis zur neuesten Zeit, C.L.Hirschfeld Verlag, Leipzig 1929; M. Pokrowski: Russische Geschichte, Berlin 1930; M. N. Pokrowski: Historische Aufsätze. Ein Sammelband, Verlag für Literatur und Politik, Wien und Berlin 1928; M.N. Pokrovskij: Aus den Geheim-Archiven des Zaren. Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach den Urhebern des Weltkrieges, August Scherl, Berlin 1919; M.N. Pokrowski: Vorwort des russischen Herausgebers, in: Otto Hoetzsch (Ed.): Internationale Beziehungen im Zeitalter des Imperialismus, Reihe 1, 1. Band, Verlag von Reimar Hobbing, Berlin 1931.

15 See on this chapter See also chapter XXIV, XXV, and XXVI of our book by Michael Pröbsting: *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry*.

16 Борис Ихлов: Больные самоопределением, December 2019, <https://proza.ru/2019/12/27/687>

17 See on this e.g. See on this e.g. Jeremy Smith: Red Nations. The Nationalities Experience in and after the USSR, Cambridge 2013, pp. 17-96; Terry Martin: The Affirmative Action Empire. Nations and Nationalities in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939, New York 2001; Hélène Carrère d'Encausse: The Great Challenge: Nationalities and the Bolshevik State 1917-1930, New York 1992; Ditte Gerns: Nationalitätenpolitik der Bolschewiki. Die Herausbildung der bolschewistischen Konzeption der Nationalitätenpolitik von den Anfängen bis zur ersten Verfassung der UdSSR, Düsseldorf 1988. On Trotsky's approach to the national question in the USSR and Stalin's policy see e.g. Leon Trotsky: The Revolution Betrayed (1936), Pathfinder Press 1972 (chapter VII).

18 On the RCIT's position on the Chechen liberation struggle see e.g. Russian Troops Out! Self-determination for Chechnya! Joint Statement of the League for the Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI) and the Trotskyist Faction, 30.06.1996, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/freedom-for-chechnya/>; Where does the RCIT Stand on Russia's Occupation of Chechnya? <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/russia-and-chechnya/>

19 Борис Ихлов: Национальный вопрос в период перестройки, 19.2.2020, <https://proza.ru/2020/02/22/1330>

20 The RCIT has published numerous documents on the Arab Revolution (see for this <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/>). Our documents on the second wave of the Arab Revolution that can be accessed on a special sub-section of this website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/collection-of-articles-on-2nd-wave-of-great-arab-revolution/>. Our documents on the Syrian Revolution can be accessed here: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/collection-of-articles-on-the-syrian-revolution/>

21 Boris Ikhlov: About the "Revolution" in Syria, 3.9.2014, <https://www.facebook.com/boris.ichlov/posts/3258062397615502>

22 Ibid

23 Alice Bonfatti: The socio-economic roots of Syria's uprising, 21 September 2017, <https://www.aljazeera.net/en/content/socio-economic-roots-syria%E2%80%99s-uprising>

The Rise of Russia as an Imperialist Great Power

*** Russia as a Great Imperialist Power. The formation of Russian Monopoly Capital and its Empire**

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Two Pamphlets by Michael Pröbsting (International Secretary of the RCIT)

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What the RCIT Stands for

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) is a fighting organisation for the liberation of the working class and all oppressed. It has national sections in various countries. The working class is the class of all those (and their families) who are forced to sell their labour power as wage earners to the capitalists. The RCIT stands on the theory and practice of the revolutionary workers' movement associated with the names of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

Capitalism endangers our lives and the future of humanity. Unemployment, war, environmental disasters, hunger, exploitation, are part of everyday life under capitalism as are the national oppression of migrants and nations and the oppression of women, young people and homosexuals. Therefore, we want to eliminate capitalism.

The liberation of the working class and all oppressed is possible only in a classless society without exploitation and oppression. Such a society can only be established internationally.

Therefore, the RCIT is fighting for a socialist revolution at home and around the world.

This revolution must be carried out and led by the working class, for she is the only class that has nothing to lose but their chains.

The revolution can not proceed peacefully because never before has a ruling class voluntarily surrendered their power. The road to liberation includes necessarily the armed rebellion and civil war against the capitalists.

The RCIT is fighting for the establishment of workers' and peasant republics, where the oppressed organize themselves in rank and file meetings in factories, neighbourhoods and schools – in councils. These councils elect and control the government and all other authorities and can always replace them.

Real socialism and communism has nothing to do with the so-called "real existing socialism" in the Soviet Union, China, Cuba or Eastern Europe. In these countries, a bureaucracy dominated and oppressed the proletariat.

The RCIT supports all efforts to improve the living conditions of workers and the oppressed. We combine this with a perspective of the overthrow of capitalism.

We work inside the trade unions and advocate class struggle, socialism and workers' democracy. But trade unions and social democracy are controlled by a bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is a layer which is connected with the state and capital via jobs and privileges. It is far from the interests and

living circumstances of the members. This bureaucracy's basis rests mainly on the top, privileged layers of the working class - the workers' aristocracy. The struggle for the liberation of the working class must be based on the broad mass of the proletariat rather than their upper strata.

The RCIT strives for unity in action with other organizations. However, we are aware that the policy of social democracy and the pseudo-revolutionary groups is dangerous and they ultimately represent an obstacle to the emancipation of the working class.

We fight for the expropriation of the big land owners as well as for the nationalisation of the land and its distribution to the poor and landless peasants. We fight for the independent organisation of the rural workers.

We support national liberation movements against oppression. We also support the anti-imperialist struggles of oppressed peoples against the great powers. Within these movements we advocate a revolutionary leadership as an alternative to nationalist or reformist forces.

In a war between imperialist states (e.g. U.S., China, EU, Russia, Japan) we take a revolutionary defeatist position, i.e. we don't support neither side and advocate the transformation of the war into a civil war against the ruling class. In a war between an imperialist power (or its stooge) and a semi-colonial country we stand for the defeat of the former and the victory of the oppressed country.

The struggle against national and social oppression (women, youth, sexual minorities etc.) must be led by the working class. We fight for revolutionary movements of the oppressed (women, youth, migrants etc.) based on the working class. We oppose the leadership of petty-bourgeois forces (feminism, nationalism, Islamism etc.) and strive to replace them by a revolutionary communist leadership.

Only with a revolutionary party fighting as its leadership can the working class win. The construction of such a party and the conduct of a successful revolution as it was demonstrated by the Bolsheviks under Lenin and Trotsky in Russia are a model for the revolutionary parties and revolutions also in the 21 Century.

For new, revolutionary workers' parties in all countries! For a 5th Workers International on a revolutionary program! Join the RCIT!

No future without socialism!

No socialism without a revolution!

No revolution without a revolutionary party!

